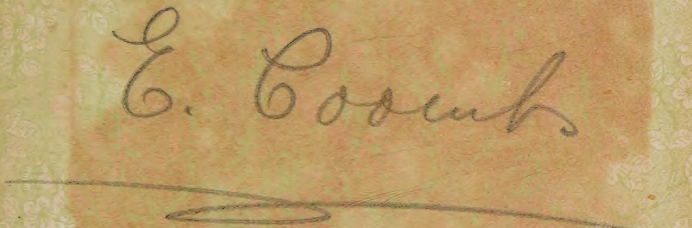
THE SALVATION OF GOD.



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THE

SALVATION OF GOD.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
"A Letter to an Infidel"	1
"The Shipwreck," and "Upon the Rock"	4
"My God! I'm Not Fit to Die!"	7
"The Sting's Gone"	12
You Must Meet God	15
Trusting to the Mercy of God	17
Beggars	20
The Blood of the Lamb	24
Gilgal Restoratives	27
A Turcoman Dies for his Son	28
Extract from a Letter	31
Soul-Exchange	33
What is to be your Future?	36
A Mighty Saviour	38
Three Solemn Warnings	42
The Devil's Text-making	44
Almost Persuaded	47
"I Shall Go to Hell"	49
When will you be Ready to Meet God?	52
"Jesus Christ the Same Yesterday, and To-day, and for Ever"	55
"Salvation is of the Lord"	58
"Prepare to Meet thy God"	59
"I Don't Feel Right"	62
The Real Truth	64
Onesimus, the Runaway Slave	65
Appropriation—What it is (Poetry)	70
"I am so Happy"	71
Heaven or Hell—Which?	73
A Warning	75

PAGE

Rest for *You* 78
Extract 80
Treasures 81
"It has Cleansed Me" 85
The Precious Blood of Christ (Poetry) . . . 89
"Ready to Perish" 90
"Ready to Save" 92
"Who Hath Believed our Report?" (Poetry) . . 95
No Novels in Heaven 96
Extracts 101
The Coming Judgment 102
A Unitarian Converted to God 108
"It is very Simple" 110
Salvation, Communion, Boldness 113
Saved at the Eleventh Hour 123
Confession unto Salvation 125
Faith 126
A Lantern, but no Light 127
The Jubilee Trumpet 129
The Earthquakes 133
"I am Saved! I am Saved!" 137
"The Heavy Sinner's Saved. Tell Everybody" . . 139
"My Step Gets Lighter" 143
John iii. 16 145
Smashed upon the Rocks 152
"I Don't Know where I am Going, but it is all Dark" . 153
"With the Mouth Confession is Made unto Salvation" . 156
The Insurance-Agent 158
"Oh, William, is this Death?" or, "Christ is Mine" . 159
Jacob's Present or God's Gift; Which? . . . 161
How have you Treated the Gospel of God? . . 165
Saved by Grace, and not of Works . . . 168
An Earnest Appeal 170
A Lesson from the Swallow 172
Salvation, Safety, and Separation . . . 177
"Such a Place as Hell" 184
The Line was Cut 186
A Famine and a Feast 188
"I am Eighty Years Old" 191

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

"A LETTER TO AN INFIDEL."

A LITTLE girl who was in the secret of those words, "I love them that love Me; and those that seek Me early shall find Me" (Prov. viii. 17), was very anxious to get a class of boys and girls, who did not go to any Sunday-school, for an earnest Christian lady to teach them about Jesus and His love. The first house she called at, a man answered her knock, and in answer to her question, "Are there any children here who do not go to any Sunday-school?" he angrily replied, "Yes, there are, and I do not intend that they should go to any. Do you know who I am? I am an infidel."

This frightened the earnest but timid child, and she ran back to her loving teacher and told her all about it, and finishing up with the inquiry, "What is an infidel?" received the following simple but solemnly true answer, "AN INFIDEL IS ONE WHO DOES NOT LOVE THE LORD JESUS CHRIST."

In a paper that appeared in the pages of this magazine a short time since, entitled "Infidelity *v.* Christianity," the following sentence occurs: "Infidelity has nothing to comfort or cheer the heart in life or in death." Since penning the above sentence a letter has been placed in my hands, written by a dying young man to one of the leading infidels of the day. I suppress names, though I have them before me, but give the

letter just as I believe it came from the pen of the writer.

"DEAR SIR,—Some time ago you sent me a tract entitled 'Who is Jesus?' I have not the strength, either physical or mental, to reply to the objections brought forward in that tract against the religion of Jesus, or even to answer the question as to 'who He was;' but I thought I should just like to tell you what Jesus is to me now, as I lie on my sick-bed.

"I find Him able to sustain and comfort me, uphold and keep me in the midst of suffering and agony that without Him would be unbearable. Through nights of sleeplessness and days of pain He is ever with me, my loving, present Saviour—'the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother;' so near, so precious, that in that which would otherwise be darkness—not knowing what is the end of this sickness—I can trust Him and rejoice, knowing that He who has died for me will do all things well, and that whether in life or in death He will never leave or forsake me. His presence, His love, Himself, are no myths to me now, but living realities. I have found Him to be what He says He is in days of health and activity, and now in sickness and helplessness I am proving more than ever His reality.

"May I ask you one question in reply to yours? Have you ever been in my condition, with but a step between you and eternity? If so, did you find in your system that comfort, that joy and rest, which I am finding now in Jesus? If you were lying here in my place, would you glory in your system as I can in my Saviour?

"You want me to give up that which is the life of my life, the light of my darkness, the joy

of my sorrow; but what do you propose to give me in the place of it? Could you honestly recommend me to change my faith for your unbelief, to give up my positive assurance for your doubt and uncertainty? I cannot tell you even what I find Jesus to be to me; for words cannot express it, and none can understand it except those who know Him as their own personal Friend. Only I find that my system, which is Jesus, can bear the test of pain, sorrow, and disappointment, and that even the near approach of death only seems to intensify both its reality and its preciousness. Can you say as much for yours?

"Your sincere well-wisher."

And now I would ask each reader of the above remarkable letter, IS JESUS A LIVING REALITY TO YOU? If not, I put to you the question that the little girl asked the infidel named at the opening of this paper: WHY DON'T YOU LOVE THE LORD JESUS CHRIST? Are you aware that it says in the word of God, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha"? (1 Cor. xvi. 22.)

If you were now called into eternity, and God were to ask you the question, "Why did you not love my Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners?" what answer would you give? Ah! you know right well, poor guilty sinner, that you would be speechless.

There is every reason why you should love Him, and not a single reason why you should not. Only think of His having died and shed all His blood on the cross, when He was bearing the judgment of God against sin! "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He

was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.)

Think of the love of God; think of the death, resurrection, ascension, and coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ; think of the strivings of the Holy Spirit with you, until your hard heart melts, and you are able to look up and say, "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me;" and, "Now I do love Him, because He first loved me." Then, and not till then, will you be able to say, "CHRIST IS A LIVING REALITY TO ME." And when you are able, by the grace of God, to say so, then remember that Christ "bare our sins in His own body on the tree, THAT WE, BEING DEAD TO SINS, SHOULD LIVE UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter ii. 24.)

H. M. H.

"THE SHIPWRECK," AND "UPON THE ROCK."

ON a beautiful morning, at the end of August, about two hundred excursionists left B——h by steamer for T——y; a mixed company; old and young, rich and poor; some sober-minded, others very far from being sober-minded; some Christians, and some, one fears, not Christians. I mean, people who are saved and know it, who belong to Christ, and know Christ, and believe in Christ, and through His death and by His grace are ready to go to be with Christ.

Doubtless also, with different objects in view, some were there for the sake of a pleasant sea trip, others desiring to see the town of T——y, while others again were taking the opportunity to go and see their friends at T——y.

A pleasant trip of about five hours brought us to T——y. Nothing occurred particularly to note in going down; some were full of frolic and giddiness.

After spending an hour or two at T——y, the time arrived for us to start on our return journey, which we commenced under a bright, shining sun, and a lovely, calm sea, most of us thinking what a pleasant trip was before us back to our homes; but, alas! the pleasantness of it came to a very abrupt and sudden termination.

After ploughing on through the sea for an hour or so, we came into a thick fog; but on we went, the foolish ones still engaged in their folly, many others looking ahead into the dense fog, but few, perhaps, thinking of the terrible awakening that soon awaited them in the immediate prospect of death and eternity. Suddenly the shout was heard, "Land ahead!" At once all eyes were gazing at those terrible rocky cliffs not twenty yards ahead, and before one had time to see the top of them, the vessel was dashing upon the rocks just beneath, with a crash that made every one shudder.

The momentary screams that rent the air, the hissing of the steam, those terrible cliffs in front, deep waters around, and a cracking, shattered vessel beneath one's feet, and the awful suddenness of it all, produced a sensation not easy to describe.

But with death and eternity staring each one of us in the face in a moment, lessons were taught that some of us will not soon forget. The frivolous party above all others was struck with the most frantic terror. Ah, my reader, giddy frivolities are poor, empty things to face death with! "And after death the judgment;"

the pleasures of sin for a season, and an eternity in hell. Others who were not so demonstrative in their dread betrayed what a terrible conflict was rending their hearts, and that the thought of death and judgment produced an anguish of soul they were unable to conceal.

But there were others who were on a more firm and solid Rock than the one that was rending the bottom of the vessel, resting upon Christ and His finished work, sheltered by His precious blood. Oh, how solid was this foundation, tested by these solemn circumstances! What rest, what peace, what blessed certainty did it give, that if we were plunged into those deep, dark waters it would be but a short, sharp struggle, then "absent from the body, present with the Lord!"

How would it be with you, my reader, if called in a moment to face death? Would it be with sin hedging you in on every side, and with the awful certainty that after death you had to meet a God of judgment? Oh, beware! it is an awful doom that awaits the sinner in his sins. Or are you resting in your own doings, supposed good works, religious ordinances? These and such like things will never give you peace with God. No; there is only one foundation "for peace with God." He (Jesus) has made peace by the blood of His cross, "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Here is a deep, solid, divine foundation that no waves nor billows can touch, nor death or judgment shake:

> "On Christ the solid Rock I stand;
> All other ground is sinking sand."

It being a calm evening and a smooth sea, we were all mercifully rescued (after three hours of peril and suspense) by little fishing-boats coming

round two or three miles in the darkness and fog; and as each little boat-load arrived in safety at the pebble-beach, lighted up with brilliant fires, and thousands of warm, enthusiastic hearts to welcome us, it reminded one of the joy, the hearty welcome, there is in heaven in the rescue of perishing sinners from eternal destruction; yea, "over one sinner that repenteth."

Reader, are you saved? are you sheltered by the blood of Christ? Oh, if not, flee from the wrath to come! Let Christ have the joy of saving you.

W. H.

"MY GOD! I'M NOT FIT TO DIE!"

JAMES T——, or "Jim," as he was usually called, was a brakesman in the employment of the Inter-Colonial Railway of Canada, on the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia section.

Young, light-hearted, and with what is commonly termed an iron constitution, he had no thought beyond the present. Exposed to the inclemency of the weather of this part of Canada, by day and night, during the long winter and spring, and constantly associated with reckless companions, and being also an entire stranger to the grace of God, he soon fell into intemperate habits.

It was about eight years ago, when travelling by rail from Halifax, U.S., that the notice of a friend of the writer of these lines was attracted to "Jim." Borne into the train, and stretched upon the floor of one of the cars, was James T——, helplessly intoxicated.

The friend alluded to, E. C——, was a shoemaker in the village where "Jim" also resided

with his parents. A few days after this, "Jim" had occasion to visit the little shop of E. C——, the shoemaker, to get a pair of boots repaired. The shoemaker at once recognized him as the man he had seen intoxicated, and rebuked him sharply for his misconduct, remarking at the same time that if he continued his drinking habits he would sooner or later find himself "*under the wheels.*"

"Jim" laughed it off, saying, "Never fear; I can take care of myself."

At this time the shoemaker was himself a stranger to grace, and could not give "Jim" anything more than what the world calls *good advice.* He did not then know that, had *he* then died, he was not *fit* for the presence of a holy God. He has since regretted he had no word for poor "Jim's" soul, and could not warn him of the terrible result of a continuance of his evil course as unprepared to meet God. However, grace has wrought wonders since in the shoemaker, for he has learnt from God's word that "*there is no difference: for all have sinned;*" and that, temperate as he was (and he boasted of it too), or intemperate as poor "Jim" was, if not "born again," and washed in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, they would *both* find their portion in the lake of fire for all eternity.

It was about six weeks after the conversation referred to above, between E. C—— and James T——, that word was brought to the village that "Jim" had met with an accident while intoxicated. It was not of a very serious nature, but it was called by railway men a "narrow escape." In a short time he was able to resume his duties, and although God was speaking to him, he paid no heed to the solemn warning, and went on from

bad to worse. How true are those words in Job xxxiii. 14–18: "For God speaketh once, yea twice, *yet man perceiveth it not.* . . . That He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He *keepeth back* his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword."

E. C——, the shoemaker, was a good, moral-living man, strictly sober, and very industrious. Like many others, perhaps like you, dear reader, he was "doing his best;" and if, as he thought, he was not quite as *religious* as some of his neighbours, he had good hope he would, when he died, find a place in heaven.

E. C—— had not seen himself as God saw him. It is a blessed thing when a *religious* sinner, as well as a poor *drunken* sinner, sees himself in the divine light. Comparison of evil with others ends at this stage. When a man really has to do with God, dear reader, it is a solemn thing; he will have no inclination to give himself a good character in the divine presence. Self-condemnation is the result when a soul is brought, by the word of God, in the power of the Holy Ghost, to *know* that ONE who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and can not look on iniquity." When the Lord answered Job, he had nothing good to say of himself. On the contrary, he exclaimed, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." These words came from Job when *he heard* the Lord; but when *he* by faith *saw* Him, he exclaimed, "I have *heard* of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. *Wherefore I abhor myself,* and repent in dust and ashes."

It would make this paper too long to do more than to refer to Isaiah and Joshua, the high priest

in the Old Testament, and Peter, Paul, and others in New Testament scriptures.

Isaiah's verdict of himself, when he saw the Lord, and heard the seraphim cry one to another, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts," was, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips," &c. (Isaiah vi.)

The writer well remembers the night, after the gospel had been preached by another, when, at the after-meeting, he was pressing those who had been brought under the power of the Word, and were convicted as well as convinced, to "confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus," &c. (Rom. x. 9), that E. C——, the shoemaker, got up, and before all told how God had saved his soul that night, and given him peace in believing. Confession of Christ at any time of a soul's history is a blessed thing; but in a case like that of E. C——, one at sixty years of age, after a life of religious formality and self-righteousness, it is indeed doubly precious.

To return to the chief subject of these remarks —poor James T——. It was within three months after the date of the accident already referred to, that, after a night of carousing, unsteady in gait and hand, and partially stupified with drink, he one morning joined a train at Moncton, N.B. On leaving the yard with a train of freight cars, and running along the roof of one to apply the brake, his foot slipped, and he fell between the cars.

As soon as possible the train was stopped, and (what was then supposed) his lifeless body was raised up, and placed in one of the freight sheds. To the astonishment of all, it was found that although the wheels of the car had passed over his left shoulder, and down his side, leaving his leg at the calf, he was not only conscious, but able

to speak. In a few minutes the engine was detached from the train, and the poor crushed body run as quickly as possible to the nearest town. There is little more to add, and that inexpressibly shocking and sad. He was taken to a doctor, who at a glance saw that the case was a hopeless one. Some such idea must have been betrayed by the doctor's face, and noticed by "Jim," for with considerable energy he begged the doctor to remove his leg and arm if it would save his life; "for," said he, "I can bear it!"

"Nothing can save you, 'Jim,'" said the doctor. "If you have any business to settle, any friends you wish to see, attend to it at once, for you have not more than three hours to live!"

Those who heard the exclamation from poor "Jim's" lips after the doctor's plain statement will never forget it—"*My God! I'm not fit to die!* Send for a minister!"

What occurred after this is not known to the writer of these lines, but he would affectionately ask you, dear reader, this question, Are you *fit* to die? "Well," you say, "I would like to be so. What will make me fit?" My answer to this is, that the precious blood of Christ will not only make you fit *to die*, not only bring you into relationship with God *before you die*, but fit you for all eternity for the presence of God, and give you to share with Him, who shed His precious blood, all His acquired glories. Is it not worth having, dear reader? What is time as compared with eternity? May the Lord lead you to come, like E. C——, the shoemaker, as a poor sinner to Christ, and get the salvation of your precious soul in believing all that God says in His word about *you*, and all that He says about *Christ*.

J. P.

"THE STING'S GONE."

IT is in loving memory of one whom the Lord has recently called home, to be "for ever" with Himself, that I write these few lines, and with an earnest prayer that you, my reader—whoever you may be, and whatever your condition, if still out of Christ—may be led to accept that Saviour with the childlike simplicity with which she did. It was not until she was laid aside with a fearful and incurable disease that she was brought to see herself lost and undone before God, with not one thing in her to answer to His holy claims, and not one thing she could do to fit herself for His presence, whom she must assuredly meet; but then it was that the Lord opened her eyes, and sent one of His servants to point her to the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Oh, with what joy did the precious truth dawn on her soul, that there was One who paid the debt, and shed His own blood that she might go free! It was some little time after this that I first made her acquaintance, and the simple trust she had in His love was something beautiful to see. It was not an unusual thing for several of us to meet in her humble cottage, and speak together of His wondrous love; and though sometimes in unmeasured pain of body she would say, "No, don't go yet. My pain is bad; but what is it compared with what He bore for me?" She had not been to bed for three years, but spent her days and nights in a chair in one corner of a room downstairs, unable to bear the exertion of being taken upstairs. But the hand which meted out

her sufferings sustained and upheld her. Sometimes she longed most earnestly to go to be at rest; but then she said, "He knows best. He will not give more than I can bear, though it's as much sometimes." Once we sang her that hymn, the last verse of which is—

"For us the Lord intends
A bright abode on high;
The place where sorrow ends,
And nought is known but joy:
With such a hope let us rejoice,
We soon shall hear the Saviour's voice."

She enjoyed it much, and she was indeed longing to hear His voice. We never visited her but we came away refreshed, so near Him did she live; and His company and presence she so realised that it was delightful to be with her. She often spoke of those near and dear to her who were still unsaved, and it was her desire and prayer that they might know something of that grace that picks up the poor sinner, and fits him for the glory above. "I am sure He will grant my request," she said once. "Oh, I do want *all* my children to be there!" As the poor body grew weaker her faith brightened. I stood beside her once; she could speak but slowly, and we knew the end was near. I said, "Even now He may come and spare your passing through death; but if not, have you *any* fear?" Her face beamed as she answered, "No; the sting's gone." A few days later several of us were with her, and she recognised each one, and called us by name. One was speaking words of cheer to her, and said, "It's all through that precious blood, is it not?" "Yes, yes," she said. She knew that to be "absent from the body" was to be "present with the Lord."

She whispered to me, "Good-bye till we meet up there." It was the last time I spoke to her or heard her voice. Shortly after the Master called her. She exchanged that lowly cottage for the "mansion" above, that body of suffering for rest, perfect rest, without a break. Through her long years of suffering not a murmur escaped her lips, so thoroughly was she sustained by His presence. The chair in the corner is empty, and loving hearts miss that smiling face; but He saw she needed rest, and took her home—the "precious dust" waiting until we are "caught up" to be with the Lord.

Now, dear reader, I turn from *her* to *you*. There is an eternity before us each—either with the Saviour, whose precious blood has made us meet, or, for the rejecter and neglecter of that salvation, "outer darkness" and banishment from His presence. Would you, if you were in her place, have been able to say, "All's well"? If not, why not? There is no fault on God's part. No, the fault is yours. You are choosing deliberately the downward road. Oh, turn to Him! for He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." You may not have another offer. The Lord is coming, and woe unto you then! Those you loved gone for ever; you left for judgment; and hope itself will leave you. Think now, and answer that question if you can—"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" God's word answers it. Listen! The word to those who receive not the truth is this, "For *this cause* God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

F. M. E. P.

YOU MUST MEET GOD.

SOLEMN thought, dear reader—you must meet God sooner or later. You are like Adam in the garden of Eden after he had sinned, hiding yourself.

Perhaps you are neither reading His word nor going to hear the gospel, lest you should hear and be converted; living in utter carelessness about this great matter—the *salvation* of your *soul.*

Or it may be you are a reader of the Scriptures, and a regular attender of the preaching of the gospel, and a very good person in many ways; but not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. You are hiding from God by sewing together the fig leaves of profession. How foolish you are to be hiding yourself in any way from the all-seeing eye of God! He sees you at this moment, wherever you are, whether shut up in CARELESSNESS, or behind the leaves of *profession.*

We beseech you to come out of your hiding-place, and take your *true* place as a guilty sinner —*just what you are*—and meet Him *now,* before you have to stand before Him at the great white throne, to be judged and condemned to *everlasting* fire. You must meet God. Are you ready? You know you are not, you cannot think of such a thing, you feel it would be terrible to be cut off in your sins. Dear reader, your hiding-places will be of no more avail than Adam's, when God said, "Where art thou?" (Gen. iii. 9.)

"The soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezek. xviii. 4.) "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm ix. 17.)

Eternal death, and the fire that never shall be quenched, is the portion of those who die in their sins. You may die to-day. Why stay away from your best Friend? He waits to save. The Lord Jesus will soon appear in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that *know not* God, and obey not the gospel. Those who are His shall soon be caught up to meet Him in the air. Will you risk being left behind for judgment? All will take place in a *moment*, in the *twinkling* of an eye; the next moment and they may be gone.

Oh, sinner, do not lose a *moment* until you meet God about your sins! You have many thousands to give account of. What can you do with them? *Nothing* but own your guilt, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He has been on the cross, in the sinner's stead; He has made atonement; His blood has been shed. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the *propitiation* for our sins." (1 John iv. 10.) "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight." (Rom. iii. 20.) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.)

"But to Him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.)

Which will you do, reader, meet God *now*, in Christ Jesus, or meet Him in *judgment?* One or other it must be. Oh, *prepare to meet thy God!*

"What horrors shall roll o'er the Christless soul
Waked from its death-like sleep!
Of all hope bereft, and to *judgment* left,
For ever to wail and to weep."

W. P.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

TRUSTING TO THE MERCY OF GOD.

MANY are the things the devil makes use of to lead people to hell. He cares not what it is, if it only suits his purpose—reformation, praying, church, chapel, or meeting-going, and even "trusting to the mercy of God." Perhaps this may startle the reader; but, alas! it is only too true. Hundreds are being duped by Satan, and going fast to outer darkness, talking about and trusting to "the mercy of God." Now, God is a most merciful God; if He were not, the whole world would have been turned into hell long ago. We read of God as being rich in mercy (Eph. ii. 4), but He cannot be merciful at the expense of His justice; and therefore to be trusting to the mercy of God apart from the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ is a fatal mistake, and if the reader is doing so, he will find that he is only building his house upon sand, and it will not stand the test of the judgment-day.

A few months ago, on going into a cottage, I asked an old woman how it was with her soul.

She hoped it would be all right; she knew God was very merciful.

"But how about your sins? Are they forgiven? If not, it is of no use to hope it will be all right, for it is all wrong, and you are on the broad road which leadeth to destruction."

"I hope not; God is very merciful."

"Well, that is quite true; for if God were not merciful we should both be in hell now. But it will not do for you to trust to that for salvation. In the day that is coming you will find that plea of no avail. God says, in Isaiah liii. 6, 'All we like sheep have gone astray.' How solemn! You and I have gone astray, and God is holy, and must punish sin. We both deserve the judgment of God. The Spirit of God goes on to say, 'We have turned every one to his own way.' Now, God holds you and me responsible for going the way we choose, instead of His way; so we are each of us guilty before God, and He will in nowise clear the guilty. But He is such a God of love, that He gave His well-beloved Son to go to the cross, to take the guilty one's place, and bear what the sinner deserved. And what you have to do is, not to trust that God will just pass over your sins and give you a place in His presence, for that He could not do, because He is light as well as love; but you must accept His Son (who is now offered you) as your own personal Saviour, as the One who went to the cross and bore the judgment in your stead. The verse further says, 'And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' What marvellous love! God gave His own Son to bear the iniquity of all those who believe."

"I do trust God will have mercy upon us all."

"But He has had mercy, and given His Son; and if you do not accept Christ, there will be no mercy for you, but wrath. Now, in the days of Noah, how many companies were there?"

"Two."

"Yes, the saved and the unsaved; those who were inside and those who were outside the ark. Now, are you like those who were saved and

safe inside, or like those who were unsaved and outside?"

"I do hope God will have mercy upon me."

"But are you inside?"

"I cannot say I am."

"Then you are outside, are you not?"

"Yes."

"Think of your danger: outside where judgment is coming. What madness to be talking about God's mercy! The door is still wide open, and God invites you to enter; and you stay outside, saying, 'God is merciful.' He has provided the place of safety, and if you do not come in, He will have no mercy upon you. Would it have availed them in the days of old to have stayed outside the ark talking of God's mercy? Of course not. The judgment would have come down upon them, and they would have perished. Here you are rejecting Christ and going to hell talking about God's mercy! Be warned, God will have no mercy, because you are refusing what He in His wondrous grace has provided—a Saviour for the lost."

Dear reader, if you, like this poor woman, are trusting to the mercy of God, or anything else but Christ, beware! The word of God says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.) Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John xiv. 6.) God still lingers in grace; He offers you a Saviour—"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John iv. 10.) The love is all on God's

side—He loved, He sent His Son, Christ has been, and He has done it all. Be wise, accept Him now, this moment, and then you will be able to tell others that God is such a merciful God, that He bore with such a sinner as you are, and opened your eyes to see His wondrous grace in giving His Son to die upon the cross to save you. When Christ is accepted you cannot talk or sing too much of God's mercy and grace; but it is a delusion for a rejecter of Christ to be saying, "God is a merciful God."

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Before you farther go!
Can you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?
On the verge of ruin stop!
Now the friendly warning take,
Stay your footsteps ere you drop
Into the burning lake.
'T was for sinners Jesus died,
Sinners He invites to come;
None who come shall be denied:
He says there yet is room."

J. S. G.

BEGGARS.

TWO kinds of beggars are universally known to-day. The first is the "professional." A kind of lazy pride keeps him back from honest toil until he has become so thoroughly schooled in eliciting the sympathies of others that he has no wish to alter his course. The second class—sad to think—are more numerous to-day than ever—men, who disdain the very name of beggar, willing to accept honest toil at any price to save themselves from starving; but circumstances find them brought down to the lowest ebb, everything gone externally but the bare, worn garments that

cover them, and through sheer want they are compelled to own their need to others.

Such are the beggars who need the practical sympathy of all who can yield it.

And if the reader but looks at these two classes, as illustrating the truth of God, words may be found, through grace, to awaken from what is false, or to meet the need of the really awakened soul.

Then who is the man who might be termed the "professional beggar" in the things of God?

Let us see.

We live in a land of open Bibles to-day. Alongside of this unequalled privilege our lot is cast, in a land teeming with profession.

Were it all real, what a host would the Lord's host be! But, alas! how thinly scattered are the true possessors of eternal life! How few are found with "loins girded and lamps burning," knuckling down to none of earth's brightest that stops short of Christ, but marching steadily forward with fixed purpose of heart to see Him! *Soul, art thou one of such?* If not, is it not true that these two words cover your whole spiritual history —"Professional Beggar"?—one in whose heart pride has swayed the sceptre, closing out Christ, and making light of His claims, and withal a pride that admires the externals of religion, and accepts them for *respectability's sake*, and for the hope at last of *ending well*.

Now mark the subtlety of this pride, and the Christ-hating power of him who wields it, seen first in Satan, the author of sin; and man deceived, by him, rises to independence of God.

Hence the effects of this pride shutting out what is real and accepting the false.

Listen to God's verdict:

"Only by pride cometh contention." (Proverbs xiii. 10.) "Pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I *hate*." (Proverbs viii. 13.)

"But," say you, "I contend with none. I strive to be loving, kind, gentle, and good to all, living religiously too before them, attending to means of grace, and praying to God to enable me to be good." All this reveals the character of the "religious, professional beggar," and because of this religious pride the contention is often the sharpest.

And here let the "sword of the Spirit" cut.

"There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. . . . For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans iii. 10–12, 23.)

And with all your best you can never attain to it. Like every other lost sinner of Adam's race, you began within the portals of the "broad way," and your march has been onward, picking out the cleanest parts of it, to find the terminus *short* of that glory, and a *real* hell your soul's only portion.

Oh, think, is it your soul, or what adorns it, you value most?

Remember, *profession* without *possession* is worthless, and Jesus declares it.

"Ye must be born again." And you contend with that sentence, because it spoils your whole religious history, proving it to be a history without Christ. How terrible to be found contending with the Son of God! Oh, shall it be true of you,

like the first beggar of this paper—nursing the very pride that shuts out Christ, and will not stoop to own your personal need of Him, as a Saviour, with no wish to alter your course? Or, like the second beggar, shall it be true of you, as you gaze on your hitherto worthless profession, and find your poor sin-burdened soul crying out, through sheer need, "What must I do to be saved?" And your willing feet, like those of many another, may turn for soul rest where religious sympathy runs high, to find history repeated, as in Luke xv. 16, "And no man gave unto him." One only source is found, as surely as sin opened the portals of the broad way, and as surely as you tread it now an awakened sinner, it may be crying, in the language of the publican of old, "God be merciful to me a sinner," so surely has the "precious blood of Christ" opened the way of escape, from sin, death, and hell, home to the heart of God the Father. The very mercy for which you cry encircles you, and the *free favour* of God brings salvation within the present grasp of your soul.

Hark! "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 8–10.)

Heaven is open to thee, sinner, because the *Man of Calvary* is there.

Listen *now* to His voice: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." (Rev. xxi. 6.)

He alone is the Giver, and your place to be blessed must be that of the believing, receiving confessor.

Then shall He get that for which His heart longs—"WORSHIP." The overflowings of a soul satisfied with Himself. P. D. O.

THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

"FOR I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. . . . Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." (Exodus xii. 12, 13; 21–23.)

Now, do you, dear reader, bow to the truth of the New Testament, which so plainly declares that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against

all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness"? that all the world is brought in guilty before God? that man is a guilty criminal condemned to death? Will you take your place in the dark category of Rom. iii., and own that you are guilty, lost, and undone? (2 Cor. iv.) that you are without strength (Rom. v. 6), condemned already (John iii. 18), without God, having no hope? (Eph. ii. 12.)

Dear friend, is this your place? Is this true of you? Do you own your case to be thoroughly hopeless? Then be still, and see the salvation of the Lord, as set forth in type by the scripture at the head of this paper.

It is blessed to see, and so comforting to know, that salvation is of God, that it is all of Him. It is the gospel of God, which is concerning His Son. It is the power of God and the righteousness of God. The very One whom we have wronged and sinned against is the One who Himself provides salvation from judgment to come in the person and work of His own Son. We know that it is He, God Himself, who "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Oh, the grace of our God! Oh, the love that is in His heart! who, now that man has fully shown himself to be utterly corrupt, a mass of "bruises and putrifying sores," comes out in all the fulness of His loving heart, and on the firm basis of the person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ offers a full and a free salvation to "whosoever will." Nay, more than this, His Spirit strives with men to compel them to come in. Poor lost man is besought to be reconciled to Him; all

in virtue of that perfect sacrifice which He has provided.

How establishing to the soul to see that it is God who provides the Lamb; God who gives His Son; God who says, "When I see the blood I will pass over you!" It is God who looks at the blood; it is God who raised Jesus from the dead; and it is God who is now preaching peace by Jesus Christ.

Can there ever be a doubt then as to the eternal safety of the weakest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ? Never. The important question is, "Are you sheltered by the blood? Is it on the side-posts and lintel?" Are you trusting to this—the precious blood of Christ—and this *alone*, to shield you from wrath to come? Is this your *only* passport? God is satisfied with Jesus; the question is, *Are you?*

I beseech you to weigh these important questions; you cannot shirk them. May God give you no rest until you can say, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Remember that Scripture saith, "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul;" and that "without shedding of blood is no remission." Also, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Peter i. 18, 19.)

When the soul is consciously resting, sheltered from coming judgment by the blood of the Lamb, peace with God is the sure result. Christ has made peace by the blood of His cross, and it is yours, poor, trembling believer, to enjoy it, and rejoice in the knowledge of it.

"He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." This is faith, which ever looks to God, and believes His spoken word in the Scriptures. It receives His testimony, avails itself of the shelter that He has provided for all, and so sets to his seal that God is true. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. x. 17.) R. M. H.

GILGAL RESTORATIVES.

BEING a few of the *effects* of the resurrection of Christ, and of the privileges which attach to the doctrine of the "new creation." (2 Cor. v. 17 in Greek; Gal. vi. 15 in Greek.)

Death abolished.
Sin atoned for.
Satan, having DONE his utmost, for ever vanquished.
The law fulfilled, its curse endured, and entirely exhausted.
Justice satisfied.
The believer justified.
God glorified.
An accusing conscience everlastingly silenced. (See 1 Peter iii. 21.)

It is remarkable that not one of the above truths could be affirmed positively as facts were the scene and the story of the CROSS ALONE before the mind.

Hence RESURRECTION is everything to the believer, as by it *alone* he is enabled to see and know too what an infinitely perfect satisfaction for his sins HAS BEEN RENDERED by that precious blood of Christ, "which cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) C. G. E.

A TURCOMAN DIES FOR HIS SON.

TOWARDS the close of the last century Persia was governed by a Turcoman king, named Kurreen Khan, who was perhaps one of the best kings the Persians ever had.

One day he heard that twelve men had been robbed and murdered under the very walls of Shirar. The criminals could not be for a long time discovered, but the king gave strict orders to the officers of justice not to give over the search. At last it transpired that the offence had been committed by a small branch of Kurreen Khan's own tribe, which was at that time encamped near Shirar. Their guilt was clearly proved, and all who were actually engaged in the murder were sentenced to be put to death. The king would not listen to the earnest intercession for their pardon, for he had vowed that every one of them should suffer death, and their being of his own tribe made him the more severe. When the criminals were brought out to receive sentence, there was a youth about twenty years of age among them, whose appearance much interested the spectators; but their anxiety was increased to pain when they saw the father of the young man rush forward and demand to speak with the prince. He was allowed to do so, and then said:

"Kurreen Khan, you have sworn that these guilty men should die, and it is just. But I, who am not guilty, come here to demand a boon of my chief. My son is young. He has been deluded into crime, his life is forfeited; but he has hardly tasted the sweets of life. He is just betrothed in marriage. I come to die in his stead. Oh, be

merciful! Let an old worn-out man perish, and spare a youth that may long be useful to his tribe! Let him live to drink the waters and till the ground of his ancestors."

The king was deeply moved at the old man's appeal, but he felt that he could not pardon the offence. The crime was murder, and to check that crime in such a country over which he ruled it was requisite that a terrible example should be made; so, with feelings very different from ours of justice, he granted the father's prayer, and the old man went rejoicing and thankful to his doom. The old man died, and the son was suffered to live on.

Let me add a few words to this exceedingly interesting and touching story.

In the first place, the guilt of these wretched men was clearly proved. They stood before their king guilty and condemned.

It is thus with the whole world; it is become guilty before God. (Romans iii. 19.) The crowning sin of man was the betrayal and murder of the Son of God. The rebellion of his heart against God is further demonstrated by his rejection of the "gospel of God, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord," whom He raised from the dead, and to whom He said, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Psalm cx. 1.) Unconverted reader, you are guilty before God.

In the second place, their sentence was a just one, as the old man said, "You have sworn that these guilty men should die, and it is just."

God is a just God, and justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne. Man is a creature of His hand, endowed with immortality, and therefore directly responsible to Him. He

has sinned, he has rebelled against God, broken His holy law, conspired against and slain His Son, and all the day long resists His holy Spirit. God's sentence is death and eternal judgment, *and it is just.* "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment." "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. . . . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx. 15.) Reader, own your guilt to Him, and seek His pardon.

Thirdly, the father of the young condemned man said, "I come to die in his stead."

If parental love led the old man to place his life in jeopardy for the sake of his son, divine love led God, the offended God, to give up His Son, and led that Son to come and die for sinners, to lay down His precious life for His very enemies. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But the Lord Jesus died for His enemies, "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter iii. 18.) Oh, reader, remember that the way to God is by the death of His Son!

Fourthly, the old man went rejoicing and thankful to his doom. He died, and the son was spared.

Blessed be God, on the ground of the death of His Son, the true believer possesses every blessing that God can bestow. "All spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ" are his. His sins are forgiven and forgotten. (1 John ii. 12; Heb. x. 17.) He is justified, and has peace with God. (Romans v. 1, 2.) He has eternal life. (John v. 24.) He has eternal redemption and meetness for heaven. (Col. i. 12–14.) He is in the

relationship of a son to God. (Galatians iv. 6.) He is called to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thess. ii. 14.) He is destined to be *with* and *like* Christ for ever. (1 John iii. 2; 1 Thess. iv. 17.)

Oh, fellow-Christian, whatever your colour or lot may be here, see what your present and everlasting portion is in Christ! Till He come, let our heart sing, and our life be to His praise.

E. A.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

DEATH is the *judgment* of God, the *power* of the devil, and the *terror* of man; and Christ met it all, and annulled it all, on the cross for the believer (Heb. ii. 14, 15), but for the unbeliever it still retains this threefold character.

Again, death is viewed in three ways in the Scriptures, *i.e.*, morally, physically, and eternally. Morally, it is separation from God in thought, purpose, and life. God is not in all their thoughts. The Holy Ghost's description of man's separation from God as a consequence of sin is awfully portrayed in Romans iii. Physically it is the separation of soul and body from each other, and eternally it is the lake of fire.

Sin plunged us into darkness, distance, and death, and Christ *in grace* went into it all on the cross that He might deliver those who believe in Him from it all; but it will be the certain portion of the unbeliever throughout eternity.

I object to your definitions of death, because they are anti-scriptural, and they touch Christ. First, death is not "an absence of life;" for God says, "She that liveth in pleasure IS DEAD *while*

she liveth" (1 Tim. v. 6); that is, to use your own expression, an unsaved person is "utterly unresponsive to God."

Second, "darkness" is not the "absence of light." It is an awful *moral* condition that sin plunged the whole world into. (See John i. 5, and Eph. v. 8.)

Third, I could not say "the chief characteristics of death" are "corruption and extinction." Did not Christ *die?* But what had He to say to either one or the other? "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades, *neither* wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see *corruption*." (Acts ii. 27.) "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, *To-day* shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke xxiii. 43.)

You have taken your definitions from philosophy and not Scripture. Our darkness, distance, and death, all that God could possibly express against sin and the sinner, Christ endured and passed through when He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Psalm xxii. 1.)

You have got a wrong thought altogether from Ezekiel xviii. 14, through not reading on to verse 20, where God explains what He means by the sentence, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

If death means extinction, then resurrection and the second death are fables; for there is nothing left to be raised, or to endure the second death, all having been extinguished at the first death.

Every fibre of my moral being shrinks from accepting such a definition of death, as to do so I must give up Christ; for *He died*, then He became extinct, then there is no Christ, and you have taken away my Lord, and I know not where you have laid Him! See where human reasoning lands one, and avoid it as you would Satan himself.

H. M. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

SOUL-EXCHANGE.

"WHAT shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Yes, his soul! Not his house, nor his lands, nor his fortune, but his soul!

We like to get the highest price for our articles of merchandise. We endeavour to sell in the best markets, and are greatly disappointed if these things go beneath the figure we had placed upon them.

We judge with great accuracy of the value of all such commodities, and in the great barter-market of this world—the vast Vanity Fair of time's commerce—he who continues to miscalculate must assuredly go to the wall.

But *the value of the soul has never been estimated* correctly by man—never! Have you ever sat down, my reader, and asked yourself at what price you set your soul? If not, do so now.

Your soul, that by which you not only live, but live to God; that which carries in itself your responsibility to Him as a creature, as intelligent, as moral, as having to do with God consciously, as privileged beyond all lower creatures to own Him, to serve Him, to render Him honour and worship, possessing faculties denied to such—your soul, have you weighed its preciousness? Have you? How have you treated it hitherto?

Now, assuming that a choice between the

"pleasures of sin" and "the way of life" has been made, which have you taken? Esau preferred a mess of pottage to his birthright; he is called a "profane man." Judas betrayed his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and "went to his own place." Agrippa, by hesitating, took the world. But Moses "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Wise man he!

"Give me your soul, and I'll give you drink," says Satan.

"Done," says the drunkard.

"Give me your soul, and I'll give you pleasure," says Satan.

"Done," says the pleasure-lover.

"Give me your soul, and I'll give you money," says Satan.

"Done," says the miser.

"Give me your soul, and I'll give you the race-course and gambling-table," says Satan.

"Done," says the spendthrift.

"Give me your soul, and I'll give you worldly fame and glory," says Satan.

"Done," says the man of selfish ambition.

"Give me your soul, and I'll give you fun and frolic, jolly days and boon companions," says Satan.

"Done," says the prodigal.

"Give me your soul, and I'll give you superstition," says Satan.

"Done," says the devotee.

"Nay, give me your soul, and I'll give you an imitation of Christianity itself, such as none can detect the counterfeit. I'll spare you its cross, its reproach, its lack of worldly favour, by a large multiplication of external devotions. I'll

make your coat so like the real pattern that you 'll pass muster before men, and, of course, before God also," says Satan.

"Done," says the immense majority of Christendom.

And thus the soul is bartered away according to taste, or choice, or fancy; but bartered to the devil for the merest trifle of flesh or the world. Sorry choice! poor exchange!

But it shows how little does man know the worth of his soul.

Satan can buy it for a trifle; Jesus could not redeem it but at the cost of His life! What did Satan ever do for you? What sacrifice did he ever make? What true counsel did he ever give? In what path of peace, or joy, or light, or purity, or truth, did he ever lead you? How has he proved his friendship? Ah! he is God's enemy; he is the world's enemy; he is your enemy!

But what has Jesus done? He "gave Himself." Heaven's bright home, He left for the manger, the wilderness, the shades of Gethsemane, the cross of Calvary. What did He not leave for you? "He died for us." He could purchase and redeem and save your soul at no lower price, than that of His own blood—the blood of one who was both Son of God and Son of man. Thus he declared the value of your soul—its infinite value. Estimate, if you can, the value of that blood, and you will know the worth of your soul.

Satan buys cheap, and then cheats the seller; Jesus buys dear, and then befriends the truster. We pay heavily to Satan for what destroys; we receive freely from Jesus that which saves. Satan

ruins, Christ enriches; the one embodies malice, the other love.

Now, love seeks your confidence; Jesus commands your trust. "Faith in His blood" gives you "peace with God;" and the walk of faith fills the heart with joy and peace in such a way that Satan's gilded snares are seen in their true character, and that the soul can say—

> "I thirst, but not as once I did,
> The vain delights of earth to share;
> Thy wounds, Immanuel, all forbid
> That I should seek my pleasure there."

Ah! no; a new vista, a new life opens out before the soul; a new foundation, a new object, a new motive, a new sphere of existence altogether. Its sins are pardoned, its sorrows shared; its tears wiped away; its weakness strengthened; its loneliness filled up; its darkness chased away by light divine; its hell changed to heaven.

Now, dear reader, what is your choice? Who is your master? To whom do you belong? Are you happy in the love of Christ? "O taste and see that the Lord is good!" "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

J. W. S.

WHAT IS TO BE YOUR FUTURE?

LET me ask you, unsaved reader, what is to be your future? This is the most important of questions, so do give a few minutes' earnest thought to it. Your future must be one of two things—"everlasting punishment" or "life eternal." (Matt. xxv. 46; also John iii. 36.) Which will you have? Will you not have Christ as your

Saviour? He is the only One who *can* save you from the eternal wrath of God, and make you "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Read John v. 24: "He that heareth my Word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but *is* passed from death unto life." There are some Christians who only *hope* to have eternal life; but the word of God plainly says "*hath* everlasting life," and "*is* passed from death unto life;" and in John x. 28 Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand." What plain yet sweet words these are.

Then, again, the believer is not only saved from the wrath of God, but shall not even come into judgment. What wondrous grace and love this displays, and what comfort and happiness it gives to the believer. Oh, will you not taste of that love offered so freely? Will you not trust Him who will keep you for all eternity? Receive Christ as *your* Saviour *now*. Do not delay. It is possible that you may not hear the gospel again. Procrastination is the thief of time. In Jesus you will find a wise Counsellor, a sure Guide, and a Comforter. He can turn your sorrow into joy, and He can give you perfect peace and rest. You may have to give up something which is not in keeping with the mind of the Lord Jesus; but He promises that for what you give up for His sake He will repay a hundredfold. (Matt. xix. 29.) Ah! how many of God's people have had much more than the hundredfold. Again, in love I ask you what is to be your future when death takes you from this scene?

C. W. B.

A MIGHTY SAVIOUR.

WHAT a blessed character—a mighty Saviour. Such is the title the Lord Jesus ascribes to Himself in the book of the prophet Isaiah lxiii. 1: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Yes, He (who is now rejected, cast out, disowned and derided by the men of the world) will one day proclaim, not in grace as He is doing to-day, but in trumpet-voice of power and thunder, when judgments have swept the earth, and all His people are eternally saved and secure, then, and not till then, will this world which now refuses Him this title, fully know how true it is. It is indeed solemn in the extreme to learn in any measure that man is such a great and *mighty sinner*, that nothing in heaven or on earth could meet his desperate need but a great and *mighty Saviour*. Then I ask, my dear reader, Have you so far considered this, and seen that unless the mighty saving power of the name of Jesus be applied in your case you are helplessly and hopelessly doomed to despair and eternal ruin? The question is of such vital importance that there is a needs be for your consideration. The eternal welfare of your precious soul is at stake. Now be honest. Is it not a fact that you have bolstered yourself up with this thought, that you need not this mighty Saviour? There has been no realization of your fearful condition in the sight of God. You have been deceived by false thoughts, priding yourself on your moral attainments, your respectability, your religion and reformation, and thus have never seen the need of this mighty Saviour, the Lord

Jesus Christ. Ah, my friend, in spite of what you are, you need to be born again, you need to have your sins forgiven, you need to have eternal life, you need to be saved by grace; for, solemn thought! apart from faith in Christ and His finished work, ye are yet in your sins.

Oh then awake up to the fact that this blessed One who is now mighty to save, has also power on earth to send you to hell, but instead He is using this very power to forgive sins. (Mark ii. 10.) Let Him put it forth to forgive you, and eternally save and bless you. He is waiting to do it, willing to do it. Then trust Him, and doubt no more.

See for a moment *who He is* in His own divine person, then *what He was* when in this scene, and *where He was,* and learn for yourself the everlasting proof that He is what He says He is—mighty to save. He was ever the eternal Son of God. (Proverbs viii. 30.) "The mighty God," etc., (Isaiah ix. 6) "who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Romans ix. 5), "upholding all things by the word of His power." (Hebrews i. 3.) Again, you find it said, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation . . . and being found in fashion as a man." (Phil. ii. 6–8.) And this brings us to *what He was* in this sin-stained scene—ever the blameless, harmless, spotless Son of God, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation—"Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews vii. 26) from the manger to the cross, and of His adversaries He could ask, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John viii. 46). And Pilate testified, "I have found no fault in Him." (Luke xxiii.)

He was infinitely acceptable to God, and could say, "I do always those things that please my Father," ever doing good to man wherever He went, yet look *where He was*—alone in the darkness of Calvary; not only forsaken by lover and friend, but forsaken by God. Oh, think of it! He upon whom the heavens opened again and again, and of whom God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well *pleased*." "Yet it *pleased* the Lord to bruise Him, and to make His soul an offering for sin" (Isaiah liii.); and sin not His own, it was our sins He bore, and all that God could express against them. God "made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21.)

What we deserved He bore, that we might never bear the Almighty's righteous ire. We deserved death and eternal judgment from a holy, righteous God, but the blessed Saviour, the just and holy One, suffered for us at the hands of God. When He said, "My God, my God, why hast thou *forsaken* me? why art thou *so far* from helping me?" (Psalm xxii. 1) listen to the cruel mock and scoffing taunt—"He saved others; Himself He cannot save . . . let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe Him." (Matt. xxvii. 42.) But what is the answer His blessed attitude suggests at that moment? Just what Nehemiah gave to scoffing Sanballat—"I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." (Neh. vi. 3.) Ah, we well know the great work He was doing. He was accomplishing His Father's counsels and purposes, by bringing eternal glory to Him and everlasting salvation to us. Blessed fact, the mighty work was all His own, though we shall share His glorious throne; and so ere He died He

cried, "It is finished," and gave up the Ghost (John xix.); and the everlasting proof to heaven, earth, and hell—that the work is finished—is that God has raised Him from the dead, and made Him both Lord and Christ (Acts ii. 36), exalted Him a Prince and a Saviour (Acts v. 31), "highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 9–11.)

Have you then done this—acknowledged and confessed Him Lord and Saviour? Just now ask yourself the first question of the New Testament—"*Where is He?*" (Matt. ii. 2)—and learn the blessed answer by looking away from yourself to where these scriptures point you—to the right hand of the throne of God—and behold this highly-exalted, sinner-loving, sinner-seeking, mighty to save Saviour and Lord; and my life for yours, an ocean of love will flood your soul with joy and peace that none but those know who have tasted this conscience-stilling, heart-filling, soul-thrilling truth; it will give you, as it has done me many a time, to sound and sing in the ears of others a response like this—

"Oh, the joy! oh, the joy I've found in Christ the Saviour!
Peace is mine, and may be thine, and happiness for ever,"

for "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." (Psalm lxxxix. 15, 16.) Come then to the knowledge of this mighty Saviour, and come now.

W. N.

THREE SOLEMN WARNINGS.

ON Saturday, September 25th, 1886, a young man named James C—— was enjoying himself with some friends in a public-house at W—— S——. At 11 p.m. he left, and went in the direction of his home at B——, a village a few miles away. The night was very dark, and the unfortunate young man must have missed his way, as next morning his dead body was found in the river W——.

In the same village, a week or so afterward, a man named Thomas S—— left his house about 6.30 p.m. for the purpose of going for medicine for his wife who was ill. To shorten his journey he walked on the railway. The night was very dark, and the poor man fell over a bridge into the roadway beneath, receiving injuries which caused his death in a few hours.

On the same day a young woman named Jane B—— took a dose of what she supposed was Epsom salts, but what was in reality oxalic acid —a most deadly poison. The unfortunate girl, after suffering intense agony, died in a short time. Poor girl! she was to have been married the next week, and no doubt was full of bright hopes and plans for the future.

Ah! dear unsaved reader, how forcibly these sad events bring a scripture in Proverbs before one's mind—"Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (Prov. xxvii. 1.) You may, perhaps, be full of plans for the future. You may be young and happy, thinking to have a long life before you, and plenty of time to be saved. Ah, but

who can tell what a day may bring forth? I wish to point out to you two events, either of which may occur at any moment. One is death, the other is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His saints. (1 Thess. iv. 16.)

Dear unsaved reader, should either of these events occur, there is nothing for you but an eternity in hell, in that place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. xxii. 13), an eternity spent in the company of the devil and his angels. You may say this is strong language, but I must be faithful with you, and on the authority of God's word let me tell you, that is the only prospect for you; not a pleasant one to contemplate, and one from which you may well turn away in horror. But, blessed be God, He is not willing that you should perish, and has so loved you, "that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever" (and that includes you, dear reader, does it not?) "believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) Think of this, my friend, and consider who will be to blame if you are not saved. You cannot blame God, for He offers you eternal life as a gift. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.) Will you take God at His word now, and accept the salvation freely offered to you?

Reader, delay no longer. Think of that solemn word in Proverbs, and take God's gift from Him now. Do not think you can be saved in any other way. Jesus saith, "I am the way . . . no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John xiv. 6.) "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

(Acts iv. 12.) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) And then death will lose its sting, and at the coming of the Lord you will be caught up to be for ever with Him.

J. C. T . . . R.

THE DEVIL'S TEXT-MAKING.

IN Matthew iv. 6 we find Satan quoting Scripture to Jesus when He was tempted by him in the wilderness; but you will observe, if you turn to Psalm xci. 11, 12, that Satan, who is the father of lies (John viii. 44), quotes it for his own vile purposes, and inaccurately. This is only a sample of the devil's text-making.

In 2 Cor. vi. 2 are the words: "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." Now I have found out, in my own brief history, that the devil quotes this inaccurately very largely indeed, and very successfully too. It is to warn you, dear reader, about his deadly efforts to make shipwreck of your immortal soul that I am constrained to put pen to paper.

If my reader is a young man or a young woman, beware, oh, beware how the devil endeavours to instil the poison of his lies into your breast by misquoting this precious text of God's own word! He will come up to you, and whisper in your ear, "*To-morrow* is the accepted time; *to-morrow* is the day of salvation." He will say to you, as he has to thousands who are now in hell, "Don't trust Jesus yet. You are young; you have the world before you; enjoy its pleasures, go to its balls, its theatres, its gaieties; don't turn yourself into a long-faced, sour-tempered, sanctimonious

hypocrite. Wait a bit, till you are old, till you are going to die, and *then* you can trust Jesus.

I once read of a man who believed the devil's lie. He said, "When I come to die, I will surely have time to say three words—'Lord, save me!'—and that will be enough."

A short time after he was in the hunting-field, his horse stumbled and threw him. The only words he said, ere his neck was broken by the fall, were, "The devil take me!" My friend, there are untold thousands who have listened to the devil's lie, and gone into eternity like that. The devil's *to-morrow* means hell for eternity.

I remember, when I was quite young, how I used to think that Christians were a lot of people who had no joy or happiness in them, and that Sunday was the most miserable day out of the seven. But God, in His great mercy, saved me more than ten years ago, and I can say, truthfully and joyfully, that the *only* people who know real joy and satisfaction are those who have trusted in the blessed Lord Jesus Christ. And I can tell you that joy does not decrease, but goes on increasing. You remember the touching story of the father welcoming his prodigal boy, in Luke xv. The last clause in verse 24 says, "And they began to be merry." The Holy Ghost chronicles the beginning but never the end of that wonderful merriment. My friend, the Christian's joys never end. What of yours? How many thousands are drinking in the devil's lie, and putting off till they find their hair is white, their brow is care-worn and wrinkled, and their feet tottering into the grave. They then begin to think that "*now* is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation."

But the devil is still ready with his lying quota-

tions. He hisses into your ear, "*Yesterday* WAS the accepted time: *yesterday* WAS the day of salvation." He says, "You have sinned away your day of grace. How can you give God the dregs of your wasted life *now?* It is too late!" If one such is reading this paper, one who has given his life, energy, and strength to the devil and his service, believe me, this is nothing else but a base, lying insinuation of the devil. The dying thief's life was fast ebbing away in the devil's service, when the blessed Saviour took him up in such wondrous grace and tenderness. God's word says, "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." (Acts xvi. 31.)

Oh, my reader, whether old or young, believe God's own word, and you will find it will never deceive or mislead you.

You may, perhaps, think this paper is written in a hard, harsh way. But did you ever hear a drowning man complaining that he was dragged out of the water by his hair in a rough, unceremonious way?

Believe me, your danger, if still unsaved, is greater, infinitely greater, than that of a drowning man; and this paper is written in all love and tenderness, that *your* precious soul may be undeceived, that your eyes may be opened to the realities of eternity before it is too late.

If I could write what is in my heart, I would so speak that you would be melted down by the love of Jesus, and be led to see such exceeding beauty and grace in Him that you would be attracted to and entranced for all eternity with Him. May God grant it, is my fervent prayer. A. J. P.

ALMOST PERSUADED.

HOW expressive of the indifference of souls to-day are the words spoken by king Agrippa to the apostle Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." (Acts xxvi. 28.) There are, alas! many who put off salvation till a more convenient season; but that more convenient season scarcely ever comes. Satan is busily at work deceiving sinners, and telling them that there is plenty of time. Often we hear the fearful words, "I want to see a little of the world and its pleasures first; there will be time enough for me to think about these things when I am on my death-bed."

Ah! dear reader, but how do you know that you will ever have a death-bed? What assurance have you that you will not meet with a sudden death, and be ushered into eternity without a moment's warning? If you knew for a certainty that your life would be required of you to-night, what attraction would the world and its amusements have for you? Would you not be all anxiety as to your eternal safety? And yet you know not one hour that you may see the next, and are still rejecting God's Saviour. Only within a few short days two persons well known to the writer have been called away from this world in their sleep. One, an aged child of God, I know has gone to be with the Lord she loved; but the other, alas! I fear he has gone to that place where there is no hope. Suppose now, my reader, you were called upon to die to-night, where would you go? Would you go to that place where all is joy and happiness? or where there is wailing and

gnashing of teeth? "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27), and you may be called away at any moment. Then how will you stand? "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Peter iv. 17, 18.) Go on in your sins if you will, continue to follow the desires and dictates of your own evil heart, reject the blessed Saviour and the gift of eternal life which He holds out to you; "but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee unto judgment."

Now is God's day of grace, and *now* He calls upon you to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) Why still neglect that blessed One? He who laid down His crown of glory to wear instead the crown of thorns; He who "humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," for your sake and mine. Beloved reader, will you any longer refuse this gracious One admission into your heart? will you still reject Him and despise His message of love? Some day, no doubt, you do intend to accept Him as your Saviour, but why not now? I plead with you, my friend, in all love and earnestness, flee to this loving Saviour *now*, and take the free gift of everlasting life which He holds out to you. Do not be almost, but *quite*, persuaded. Let Satan no longer deceive you, but flee from him and cling to the One who so loved as to give Himself a sacrifice for sins.

Neglecters, despisers, rejecters, harden not your hearts against His gracious call. Remember, "*now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation;" to-morrow may be too late. G. R. C.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

"I SHALL GO TO HELL."

MANY persons have been persuaded by the adversary, Satan, to put off the salvation of their souls until a death-bed, or until they have had their fling in the world, meaning to have Christ at last, thinking they can be saved when they like. Is it so with you, dear reader? If so, you are greatly mistaken. It is a lie of the enemy, who is leading hundreds to hell with one delusion or another. Salvation is not to be had at any time, but only in God's time. In Luke xiv. we read that at supper-time the message was sent—"Come; for all things are now ready." What was the result? "They all with one consent began to make excuse." They preferred to stay away. They could have had the oxen, piece of ground, or a wife, and have come to the feast as well; but they had no heart to come, therefore the message was sent to others (not to them again), and the solemn word of the lord was, "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." Why not? Because they refused. Could they have come at any time? Most certainly not; only when the invitation was sent to them. God sends a message to persons, and if they dare to pray to be excused, or to come at another time, God may have them excused altogether. Think who sends the message—the living God. What madness to slight or reject what He says! Many a

one who has put off his salvation to a more convenient season has found out, alas! that it was too late for him.

So it was with the woman who uttered the words at the head of this paper. Many times she had heard the invitation, and rejected it; and when she was on her death-bed I asked, "If you die to-day, how will it be with you?" I received the dreadful reply, "I should go to hell!"

I at once began to put the gospel before her, and repeated John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"I know it; but I should go to hell," she replied.

"But hearken to what that verse says, 'God so loved the world;' that takes in all; none are excluded. In Romans iii. we read of all the world being guilty before God, yet God loved to such a marvellous extent as to give His only begotten Son. Think what a gift this was. And why? So that you or any one else may believe in Him, and have everlasting life. Take God at His word; He is a God of love."

"I know it; but I shall go to hell!"

Again and again I begged her to have Christ. "But would you not like to be saved?" I continued.

"Yes; but I shall go to hell!"

What a sad case—a dying woman that would like to be saved, and yet going to hell! Why was this? She, like the men in the parable, had refused to come when the message was brought to her; and now it was too late. She would not have Christ in health, and she had to die without

Him. Her end was dreadful, leaving no doubt as to where she was going.

"To hell! to hell!" was her dreadful cry. Could nothing be done? No. Many years God had borne with her, many times He had called, and she had refused, and now none could deliver. "He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Proverbs xxix. 1; i. 24–33.)

She had refused to listen until it was too late. What an eternity that woman will spend in outer darkness, and all the while be able to remember the many times she heard the gospel and rejected the offers of salvation!

Beware, dear reader, of turning away when God speaks. Would not an individual be punished for treating a message from a person in authority with contempt? And yet numbers are treating the message of the living God far worse than they would one from a mere man. But if the people did not escape in the past, when God spoke (Heb. xii. 25), how shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation? There will be no escape; your condemnation will be certain; and it will be because you refused when God called. Oh, listen no longer to the lie of the devil, who says there is plenty of time! There is not a moment to lose. Escape for thy life; flee from the wrath to come. Look not behind thee, but at once "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." He demands nothing of you, "He bids you nothing bring." He says, "Come; for all things are now ready." (Luke xiv.) But if you will not come and have the blessing, you will have your part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. (Rev. xxi. 8.) J. S. G.

WHEN WILL YOU BE READY TO MEET GOD?

WE offered an old man a tract the other day; he thankfully took it, and said, "I 'm ready."

"What made you ready?" we asked.

"What was done on the cross," he answered.

"Who did it?" we rejoined.

He pointed upwards, and replied, "The One who is on the right hand of God."

He added, "I have not long to be here. It 's better on before!"

This man did not hope to be ready at some future time. He was ready; he had received a God-provided fitness for glory, by believing on Christ, whose work for lost sinners was finished eighteen hundred years before he was born—the very same work which took the soul of a poor thief straight from a cross into the paradise of God, without one speck or stain of sin upon him, or a single charge that could lie against him.

Is this your fitness, reader? It is the only title God requires or acknowledges. Are you relying on Christ and His finished work *alone?* Who did the work? The only One who could glorify God by being obedient even unto death, or who loved poor sinners enough to stoop, in grace, so low as to bear on the cross God's wrath against the sins of the thief on the cross beside Him, and to take him so high as to be with Himself in His Father's house above that very day. (Luke xxiii. 43.)

Not only did my aged friend know that his sins were all forgiven, but his heart had been so won by that wonderful Saviour in glory, that his links

with this world were broken, and he could say, "It's better on before!"

Reader, are you ready to meet God? If you are trying to be good, then you are not ready; you will never be good enough, you come short of the glory of God. (Rom. iii. 23.) You are lost, ruined, undone! Oh that your inmost soul may be laid bare to you in the presence of God as you read these lines!

You may purpose to be ready some day, but when? To-morrow? Ah! then you are not ready to-day, and to-morrow may never dawn on you. To-morrow is not yours. He who said to the dying thief, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise," said to a certain rich man, "*Thou* fool! *this* night *thy* soul shall be required of *thee*." How awful, if you are not ready *now!* No far "better on before" for *you!*

An aged man once said, "Ah, this is a beautiful world," and wept at the thought of leaving it. He had "nothing on before."

A young man was asked to come and hear the gospel preached one Lord's-day—he was out with his bicycle—and shook his head in reply. To listen to God's glad tidings was "not good enough." He considered something better here, a bicycle, and had no heart for Christ.

Another young man also liked pleasure. One night it was said to him, "Young man, if you go on like this, **you will lose the love of God.**"

Oh, ye sinners, careless, prayerless, godless, ponder it well. If you go on like this you will *lose the love of God.* He has a heart for you, if you have none for Him; for "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish,

but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) But God's best gift, His only begotten Son, and everlasting life in Him, is not good enough for you!

Daily you are nearer leaving life and all you love behind. In a moment death may take you *out* of it all *into* the presence of God, from whom you are now hiding, with all your sins upon you, to be bound hand and foot, and "cast into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xxii. 13.)

You are subject to the judgment of God NOW. (Rom. iii. 19, see margin.)

Trifle no longer with the LOVE OF GOD that yearns over thee, bids thee come to the Father's bosom confessing thy sins; love that has waited for thee long, and is waiting still. Oh, come home; your Father's kiss receive.

"It's better on before!" No aching hearts, no sin-stricken consciences, no tears, no death in yon heavenly city. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth;" but thou wouldst mar its beauty, and so must be outside for ever, O sinner, in thy sins!

You cannot serve two masters, and if you turn your back on the love of God revealed in His Son, what have you to look forward to?

What wilt thou do with thy sins "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"? (Mark ix. 46.) Dost thou hate them—feel them a heavy burden? wouldst be freed from their yoke and thy terrible doom? Then, in simple faith, dear anxious soul, look up to Him who is on the right hand of God, who "bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24), and you will know that "the work" finished on Calvary has made you "ready" too. "The Lord

(Jehovah) hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. liii. 6.)

What entitled my aged friend thus to say "I'm ready"? Was it his goodness or his feelings? Neither: it was nothing in himself. It was faith in the testimony of the Scriptures to the value of the Person and work of Him whom God raised from the dead, which cleared his conscience and satisfied his heart. By faith he had put *on* the righteousness God made *for* him, *outside* him, by Christ's death and resurrection, and was *therefore* "ready," happy and abiding in Christ, and longing to be with Him.

"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x. 8, 9.)

"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." (Luke xii. 40.) A.

"JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER."

HEBREWS xiii. 8.

DEAR reader, I would affectionately invite you to a quiet, serious consideration of the precious portion of God's holy, unchanging, unalterable word that heads this short paper. Enough to inspire confidence in every heart; enough for the sinner, as also for the saint. Oh, to know there is One in glory who was once here in the midst of poor, heart-broken, heavy-laden

sinners, to dispense to them the grace that could far more than meet them in the depths of their ruin, guilt, and sin! Turn to the case of the woman in Simon the Pharisee's house (Luke vii. 37), and see there how He meets the need of her soul, so much so that she can go from His presence with the consciousness of sins forgiven, everlasting salvation, and peace with God, all through simple faith in the Lord Jesus and His spoken word to her soul; and He, the blessed, spotless One, who did it on His way to the cross, with all its untold agony and suffering, to make it all good to her by His own precious death. Oh, dear reader, fain would I bring your heart into immediate contact with Him, who is still the same in the boundless love and grace of His heart, be the need or the guilt whatever it may.

Grace is upon the throne, grace is still reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. v. 21.) Now is the time to avail yourself of it; soon that blessed One will take the character of a Judge, then it will be all over for those who have slighted, spurned, and refused His grace, never more to have Him presented to them in love, compassion, and grace. Oh, my reader, have you a link divine and real with that spotless, holy, peerless Person now upon the throne of God in heaven? Has your conscience been awakened and your heart reached by that wonderful love? Can you say with divine certainty, having for the foundation of it His own blessed, unalterable word, "It is well with my soul"? or are you still tempest-tossed by the huge waves of unbelief, ready to launch you into an endless hell? Then turn directly and at once to Him, now glorified in heaven, and tell out to

Him the tale of your guilt in the quiet secret of His own blessed presence, and He will not turn you away. His heart is still the same. Whatever may have characterized you, I can tell you there's a Saviour in glory for you. Then trust Him now, delay no longer, time is short, the day of salvation is drawing to a close, your soul is of priceless value, heaven is a reality, hell is a reality, your sins are a reality, the Saviour is a reality, now presenting Himself to you through His blessed Word; and the devil is a reality, ever seeking to engage your heart with anything and everything but Christ, and what He has accomplished on Calvary's cross. It may be that this is the last message you will be privileged to receive, and then what shall it be?

Whether religious, educated, moral, or otherwise, you need, through the living, operative, and searching word of God, to take your place before Him as a confessed sinner; and the blessing He longs to bestow upon you will be yours through simple, unquestioning confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the language of the little hymn you will be able to say—

"Jesus, I can trust Thee—
Trust Thee with my soul;
Guilty, lost, and helpless,
Thou canst make me whole.
There is none in heaven
Or on earth like Thee;
Thou hast died for sinners,
Therefore, Lord, for me."

Then let your practical ways and conversation in this poor, dark, Godless world speak of that blessed One who is ever, as the blessed word of God declares, "The same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

R. G.

"SALVATION IS OF THE LORD."

BEFORE salvation can be received by any child of Adam, he must realize the fact that "salvation is of the Lord." He must learn, not only that man is unable to purchase salvation, but that *he has not a fraction with which to help towards its purchase.*

When a man has learned that all his *righteousnesses* are as filthy rags, the hand is placed upon the mouth, and the cry breaks forth from the heart—"Woe is me! for I am undone." Henceforth he is shut up to God: if salvation come to him at all, it must come as a free gift. Has the reader reached this position? Has he learned that prayers, though accompanied with tears, the most rigid performance of duties, yea, that even the bestowing of the whole of one's goods upon the poor will avail nothing for the purchase of salvation? If so, it will be to you a matter of no small importance that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." He came into this world to manifest God's heart toward poor sinners; but man hated Christ, and crucified Him between two thieves.

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour." God now directs the sinner that seeks salvation "without money and without price" to the Lord Jesus Christ; and Christ's word to every one, without an exception, is—"Look unto Me, and be ye saved."

Has the reader learned, not only that he is lost, but that Christ waits to save him? Has he turned to the Lord Jesus? Christ says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;"

and *His word shall never pass away.* If you have turned to Him with a no larger measure of faith than that of the leper who said, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean," He will not reject you, but will answer your petition with the gracious words, "I will; be thou clean."

No man that has taken the place of a lost sinner, and come to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, has ever been rejected. Christ has pledged His word to receive all who thus come to Him.

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. x. 13.) C. H.

"PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD."

Amos iv. 12.

THE circumstances under which these words were uttered may be very appropriately applied to the present day. Israel was in the most abject state of apostasy, which could not but bring forth those words of irony with which the prophet reproves them: "Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression." The "house of God" and the place of "communion with God" were degenerated into places of licentiousness; as you get in the gospels the blessed Lord's own words of reproof: "My house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." And, notwithstanding the various ways in which He chastened them, they were incorrigible; and after enumerating those ways, He winds up each of them with—"Yet have ye not returned unto Me, saith the Lord." And now come the solemn words—words which should

startle the most obdurate—"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."

And now, in the application of these words to the present day, God has sent forth His own beloved Son into this world, when every other means failed—the earth could not produce anything capable of pleasing Him or satisfying His just demands. Man, in responsibility, failed in every way in which he was tried. And now in infinite love God sends forth His Son, saying, "They will reverence My Son." And how have you treated Him? You say, "I have never treated Him badly. I didn't mock Him, or spit on Him, or drive those nails into His hands, as the Jews did." Yet you are just as guilty if you are still refusing His proffered grace. Oh, to look back at the way that God-man was treated here! that One who came not to do His own will, but the Father's! that perfect Man (the meat-offering) who was always a sweet savour to God, passing through this wilderness unruffled by its cares or tumults, and yet ready to care for every one that needed His compassion! Healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, and healing every other infirmity to which the human body was subject as a consequence of sin. His heart went out in compassion to all; none were refused. And what effect had all those gracious acts of love? They had the effect of bringing forth all the bitterness, hatred, and enmity of the Adam-man, nailing Christ to a cross, to die the most ignominious death that man could suffer.

The moment He came into this world there was no room for Him, no room from the "manger" to the "cross." To use His own blessed words, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have

nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." But He came not to do His own will —God's righteous demands had to be met, sin had to be put away; and He was the victim of God's own providing. Oh, those moments of intense agony when God's presence was withdrawn from Him, and darkness was all around! The earth could not enter into His sufferings; He bore them alone. God was of purer eyes than to behold sin; and His presence withdrawn from Him intensified His agony, and drew forth that bitter cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

And now, dear reader, in the face of all those manifestations of His love, can you refuse to accept His free gift? Though it costs you nothing, it cost Him more than you can have the least apprehension of. I "pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God;" for if you refuse Him as a Saviour, you will have to receive Him as a judge; for all judgment is committed to Him, because He is the Son of man. What if the words, "Prepare to meet thy God," were addressed to you to-day? What preparation have you to make? To turn over a new leaf? To attend to your religious formalities better than you have done previously?

"All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." All things are ready, come! Come as you are; for God is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," and "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Trifle not with conscience! "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27), "*Prepare to meet thy God*"!

"I DON'T FEEL RIGHT."

"YES, I *do* believe on Jesus, but I don't FEEL right."

Such is the honest expression of many an anxious soul. To such let me say a few words.

A few years ago a friend and I went down into a coal-pit, when we experienced peculiar feelings. After we had descended a short distance I felt precisely as though we were going upwards; and I could have been sure that such was the fact, if I had not positively *known* that we were going downwards.

We explored the mine and returned, the cage coming down to where we were, to lift us from the darkness and smut of the pit into the light and freedom of the outer world. Then my feelings were exactly reversed. I *felt* as though we were dropping downwards, but I KNEW that the powerful engine was bearing us upwards as fast as it could, and we soon stepped out on to the ground in the open air.

Now this is somewhat similar to the experience of souls. When they are going downward at a rapid rate to the pit of everlasting despair, Satan does his best to give them happy, comfortable feelings; and when they are questioned as to their salvation, their reply is, "Oh, we certainly *hope* to be saved! we *feel* quite happy!" Sad delusion! No hope is to be relied upon which is not grounded upon the sure word of God; no happy feelings are to be trusted which are not produced by faith in the Scriptures of Truth!

But when the conscience is aroused, and the poor sinner sees himself in all his guilt before

God, what a change! No flippantly-expressed *hope* will satisfy him now; he must KNOW that there is a Saviour for him. How can he *know?* The word of God replies, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." As the cage descended to lift us from the bottom of the coal mine, so this blessed Saviour descended into this dark world to save your soul, poor sinner. As we stepped into the cage, trusting it to carry us every inch of the way, so may you trust that precious Saviour who died for you; the saying which tells of Him is "*faithful*," and "*worthy*" of your acceptance.

"I do accept it," you say, "and trust Jesus as my Saviour; yet I *feel* as though I *must* go to hell, for I am so vile a sinner." Ah, this is Satan's work again! When you were going to hell as fast as time could carry you, he sought to make you *feel* as if you were going to heaven. Now, when Jesus is bearing you to glory by His mighty power, Satan would make you *feel* as if you must drop down to hell. What is the cure? Let go your feelings; consider them not; just hold fast to what you KNOW. God's word says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; THAT YE MAY KNOW that ye HAVE eternal life." Blest knowledge! Whatever your *feelings* may be God would have you *know* that you have eternal life. The One who died for the poor sinner upon Calvary's cross is a perfect, eternal Saviour. Trust Him unwaveringly every step of the way. Meet all Satan's temptations with the words God has put into your lips; not "I *feel*," but "I KNOW." Sooner or later, every timid soul that has trusted

Jesus will have the joy of stepping into the bright glory of God, to sing for ever the praise of a faithful Saviour. (1 Tim. i. 15 ; 1 John v. 13.)

J. R.

THE REAL TRUTH

IS that grace reigns triumphant ; and the tidings run, that God, who gave for all (2 Cor. v. 15) His blessed Son, *still welcomes* SINNERS—not imputing sin, and wants to know why you don't enter in, dear reader, and secure your place (for literally that is the only thing under the sun one can be *sure* of) at the marriage supper of the Lamb (the Lord Jesus Christ) so shortly about to commence.

Be persuaded to come, for all things are ready. Work is not required at your hand ; strength is not needed ; nor can there be any *necessity* to pray for that which God is now "from heaven" (Heb. xii. 25), as it were, "*beseeching*" (*Greek only*, 2 Cor. v. 20) you to take, seeing that He Himself has provided everything, has prepared everything.

The REAL TRUTH is, that admittance to heaven is FREE to any who *will* have it on God's terms; viz., as His "gift." (Eph. ii. 8.) It is all of grace, that is, His unmerited favour. Be not afraid, therefore "only" (Mark v. 36) take God at His word, and come, "for all things are now ready" (Luke xiv. 17), because Christ HAS DIED AND RISEN AGAIN, and His presence in the heart is the alone secret of all power as well as inclination to walk worthy of such a holy God, as well as of peace, quietness, and assurance for ever.

C. G. E.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

ONESIMUS, THE RUNAWAY SLAVE.

PHILEMON.

THIS little epistle shows us the condition of each one of us by nature, and the grace that meets us in that condition, the grace that overwhelms us. The greater part of this epistle is about a runaway slave, Onesimus, who had taken that which did not belong to him, who was, in fact, a thief. We are all like Onesimus by nature. Adam and Eve took what they ought not in the garden of Eden, and then ran away, and we are all like them more or less. We all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. (Rom. iii. 23.) This is a sweeping statement, but it is God's own word.

We find in Isaiah liii. 6 how like Onesimus we are: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." This answers to Onesimus in his runaway condition. You cannot exclude yourself. God says "all," and that means everybody. It is God's word. This shows that we are wilful wanderers. Every man and woman amongst us has an iron will, and there is nothing that a man will not dare to do in his self-will. A man would break up the world to make a stool to sit upon if left to his own self-

will. God is right in saying, "We have gone astray." Suppose we were a flock of sheep all gone astray, each in a different direction. The shepherd could not get us back all together en masse; he would have to bring us back one by one. And in the same way we must be saved individually; we cannot be saved in a body. The Son of God gave Himself for me. It is an individual matter. The Good Shepherd has set His heart upon us, and He will have us, although He has to go so many ways to get us. Now see how grace in Him meets guilt in us. Do you believe these words in Isaiah, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way"? How sweet are the words which follow! "And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Can you go in at the first "all" of that verse (that "all" which is as dark as hell) and come out at the last "all," which is as bright as heaven, and shows how our sins can be put away? Look at these two "alls." Can you go in at the first "all" of the verse? Does it throw its arms around you? If you can go in for that "all," you are in for all the blessing of the last "all." Do you believe that you are a wayward wanderer, and that God laid your iniquities on Christ at Calvary's cross?

Look at verse 5 of the same chapter: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." The bruising which we deserved to endure, Christ endured for us on the cross. Think of it. Can you see how sweet is the grace in this verse? When God laid the stripes upon Him, He bruised Him for our iniquities. Where are

these iniquities of ours for which He suffered? Are you anxious to know what has become of them? Isaiah vi. 7 will tell you. "And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Listen to these golden words. How they teem with grace! God tells us that our iniquity is taken away, our sin is purged.

Read Hebrews x. 17: "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." A poor girl in Scotland, who was exceedingly anxious about her soul, was left to mind her father's house, when all the rest of the household had gone to work in the fields. She believed that Christ had been bruised for her iniquities; but the devil had persuaded her that God would bring them up against her, and she was ill and pining away by reason of her distress of soul. She took down the great family Bible, and opened it accidentally at Hebrews x. 17, and her eye met the words, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember NO MORE." She cried, "These are God's own words," and shed tears of joy over them, until the page of the Bible was saturated with her tears. She went out into the fields to her friends. They saw her coming, and she was shouting, "*No more, no more.*" They thought she was gone out of her mind. So she was; but she was gone into the mind of God. They led her back to the house, and they saw the Bible, and read those blessed words, and could understand what the poor girl meant by her cries of "*No more.*"

To return to Philemon. Paul says, in verse 18, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that to mine account." What grace! Think

of it. He undertook the whole of Onesimus' liabilities. Can any one of us meet God's claim upon us? God has claims upon us all. Do you ever think of what those claims are? of your indebtedness to Him? Not one of us can meet his liabilities. But Christ says, as it were, "Put that to my account; I will repay." How did He repay? God laid our iniquities upon Him. A verse in Romans vi. 23 explains it: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through [or in] Jesus Christ our Lord." Who has taken those wages? Christ took our wages on Calvary's cross. Christ has taken the cup of death at the hands of a holy God, that you and I might be delivered from eternal death, which is our rightful due. There was no other but Himself who could do this. He was the only One who could answer to God for our liabilities, and meet all God's claims against us.

You must not trust your own heart, but cannot you trust Christ's heart, which shed its last drop of blood for you? He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. God is satisfied, and will never open the question again.

There is another point in Philemon: "If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself." (ver. 17). Think of Paul writing to Philemon thus about the runaway slave, "Receive him as myself." What did Paul mean? That if Philemon carried out Paul's instructions, the poor slave would receive the same welcome from Philemon as Paul would have done. And what does Christ say to God about you? Let me show you from Scripture. Look at John xvii. 22, 23: "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We

are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, *and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.*" Will God ever love Christ less than He does now? No. Then He will never love you less. He loves us as He loves Christ. John xx. 17 says, "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God;" that is, He gives us His place of relationship before His Father. Galatians iii. 26 shows how we become children of God, and chapter iv. 6 how we may know that we are children of God. We have a true Father in heaven, and He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The first epistle of John (iv. 17) says, "Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world." "*As* He is, *so* are we." Look at the analogy expressed by these two words, "AS" and "SO."

And now lastly, in Philemon 19, Paul says, "Thou owest unto me even thine own self." Now, do we who are saved believe those words of Paul in 1 Cor. vi. 19: "Ye are not your own"? Do we believe we are not our own, but that—spirit, soul, and body—we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, He having bought us with His blood, and taken possession of us by the Holy Ghost? "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," which is in you? What a magnificent fact! People say, "Cannot we do what we like with our own?" What is there about you that is your own? You have nothing about you that is your own, save your

sinful nature and the fruit it bears, and these we are to reckon ourselves dead unto. (See Rom. vi. 11; 1 Peter ii. 24.) Spirit, soul, body, we belong to the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. Those words of Paul should be written in large letters, and hung up in your rooms, to be continually before you—"*Ye are not your own.*" If you really believe that, you will say to-night, "Lord, take all that is Thine. Let my eyes look for Thy glory; my heart throb for Thy glory; my blood circulate for Thy glory; my breath breathe for Thy glory; my walk be for Thy glory; let me live only for Thy glory." When I get up in the morning I say, "Lord, what am I to do?" And He says, "Follow thou Me."

This is God's glad message to every weary heart that may read this paper. May God save you as you are. Christ has answered for your liabilities. He has received the wages of your sins. He has said to God, as it were, "Receive them as myself." And lastly, "YE ARE NOT YOUR OWN." Then live to and for Him who died for you, lives for you in heaven, and will soon come again to receive you. H. M. H.

APPROPRIATION—WHAT IT IS.

LORD JESUS, Thou 'rt my Representative
Before the face of God! My perfect Peace!
My Hope of Glory! My Eternal Life!
My Intercessor and High Priest above,
As well as "the Propitiation"* for
My slightings and forgetfulness of Thee,
And all the deep, deep root of sin in me!

C. G. E.

* 1 John ii. 2.

"I AM SO HAPPY."

FOR several months S. K—— had been in ill health, and the Lord had been doing His own work in her soul, until her distress and anxiety reached such a pitch that she sent for one, who took the place of a guide, to come and see her. But, alas! it was only worse than disappointment; for his message to this poor troubled soul was, that when she got better (which she was never likely to do), she was to pray to God to enable her to overcome her besetting sin. The Spirit of God had too well done His work in her soul to admit of her being satisfied with that; for what she wanted was pardon for the past, and something assured and certain for the future. How could she meet God with the guilt of her sins still upon her? How could she escape eternal condemnation if she died unsaved?

A young person, who was often with her, and saw the distress she was in, proposed to her to ask Mrs. —— to go and see her. She caught at this with avidity; and when Mrs. —— received the message, she went up at once, and found her in the most overwhelming distress of soul—under the sense of sin and the terror of judgment. It was happy work to put before one in such a state the glad tidings of a free and full salvation; to tell her of that precious blood of Christ, that was of such value in God's sight that it was sufficient for all sin; and to make known to her God's own assurance that whoever believed was justified from all things. (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) And if God Himself justified, who then could condemn? (Rom. viii. 33, 34.)

Then and there she took God at His word. She simply believed His testimony to the value of Christ's work, and as the result, peace—deep, profound, blessed peace—flowed into her soul, and dispelled all her doubts and fears. What room remains for such when that which caused them is gone for ever from before God?

"I have lived," she said, "for forty-one years, a sinner without God;" and now, for the three short months that were left to her, she lived indeed for Him, testifying to every one she saw of what the Lord had done for her soul; while not only was that period marked by the most profound peace, but the deep happiness she spoke of as enjoying, even in the midst of the greatest suffering, and with death full in view, bore witness to the sufficiency of Christ, not only to save and sustain, but also to *satisfy* the soul.

A month before she was taken, and when all about her thought she was dying, her husband said to her that she might yet rally.

Putting her hand on his arm, she said:

"Jesus is standing by me;" and, after coughing very badly, "He has done all *so* well, *so* well."

The hymn, "High in the Father's house above," having been repeated to her, she said:

"I hope I 'll spend my sabbath" (it was Saturday) "in heaven."

"But if the Lord needed you down here to-morrow, would you not be willing to remain?"

"Oh, yes," she answered; "for Him! But I do want to be with Him."

Referring to the Lord being near her, she said:

"He never leaves me; oh, He never leaves me!"

"And He never will," her visitor replied.

"Oh, no," she said, "never!"

When at length the time of her departure was drawing near, she said she should now soon be at home, and added, "I am *so* happy, *so* happy."

The day before she died, one who had been much with her sang the hymns, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!" and, "High in the Father's house above." Though so weak, she joined in now and then, and kept lifting up her hands, as if she loved it; and then, before her visitor left, she thanked her for all she had been to her. A few hours later she was sent for in the early morning, but only to find, on arrival, that S. K—— was "for ever with the Lord."

She longed to depart, that she might be with Christ. My reader, let me ask you, What would death be to you if you were called away? Would it be as the entrance-gate to unending blessedness with Christ? Or would it be as the dread messenger to summon you to judgment? Would you leave this world only to have what your sins deserve? Or would it be, like Mrs. K——, to have what Christ deserved, and which He freely gives to all that believe on Him? F. S. M.

HEAVEN OR HELL—WHICH?

COULD walls speak, I suppose every house would have some sad story, some tale of suffering to tell.

This is a weary and disappointing world we are living in, as no doubt every one has proved, or will prove, at one time or another.

But there is a land of bliss, where those who enter shall have "no more pain, nor death, neither sorrow, nor crying;" but as truly as there is a

land of bliss, there is also a land of woes untold, where there will be torments and wailing and gnashing of teeth. In hell too there will be *memory;* those who *choose* to go there will "remember" (as the rich man in Luke xvi. 25 did) that in their "lifetime" they were *offered*, but *refused*, God's salvation *without* money and without price. Oh, if they could only *forget* their lifetime when they *neglected*, and finally *rejected*, what was there for them to take, and which would have been the highway to eternal happiness! None dare, none *could*, buy the salvation of their immortal souls; it cost nothing *less*, nor *more*, than the precious blood of the Infinite One—Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. But it is only sinners who confess to having no strength, and *nothing* to pay, that Jesus will have. He says, "I came not to call the righteous;" that is, people who think (vain thought it is) that they *must* and *can* do something of themselves; but God says, "To him that worketh *not*, but believeth on Him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Romans iv. 5.)

There will be no people in heaven who justified themselves before men, for God knoweth the heart, and that which is highly esteemed among men is ABOMINATION in the sight of God. (See Luke xvi. 15.) And what is it that is "highly esteemed among men"?—charitable acts, liberal-handedness, a moral life, attending to religious duties; and this is what the poor sinner, finite man, whose very being is steeped in sin, and who was born in iniquity, this is what he thinks the HOLY God, who cannot look upon sin, will be satisfied with.

Ah, no! what God wants is a sinner with

nothing to offer Him but his sins. God wants to know if you are ready to stand face to face with Him. There is nothing so uncertain as life. Is the blood of the Lord Jesus your passport to heaven? Are your trembling feet resting on the "Rock of Ages"?

Jesus *does* love the contrite sinner dearly. He shed His own life's blood for you, His enemy; what you would not do for your best friend. God is longing to have you as His own dear child; and in His "great love" is yearning after you. *Come,* sinner; He *has* been and *is* "rich in mercy." He cannot do any more for you than He has done. It now remains with you to choose

Christ or the devil?
Heaven or hell—which?

"Come unto me *all* ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I [Jesus] will give you REST."

"Choose you *this* day."

Do not chance your *eternity* until to-morrow. To-morrow's sun may shine on your lifeless body. Say, will it be a *Christless* body too?

You must not think it is a gloomy thing to be a Christian. There is no such real happiness as that known by the sinner who rests solely on the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. A. G. T.

A WARNING.

ROBERT W—— is at rest now; he is *absent from* the body, *present with* the Lord.

He came here six weeks ago from a large hospital, having undergone several painful operations under the surgeon's knife. They tried to

cut the cancer out, but this they could not do. So poor Robert was told that they could not do anything for him; and for six long, weary weeks, day and night, his sufferings were dreadful. Until the last week of his illness he could get little or no sleep. Then the pain abated a little, but left him so weak and feeble that diarrhœa set in, carrying him off into the glorious rest—in the presence of the Lord, where there shall be no more pain.

The first time I went to see him, I was led to read Psalm cvii.; and when I came to that part where it says, "Fools because of their transgressions, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses. He *sent* His *word*, and healed them, and delivered them from *their* destruction," he struck his breast, and said, "*That's me!*" and told me that he had turned his back upon God's truth, and the cancer was a judgment. He had been converted through hearing his minister preach, and the Spirit of God was leading him on in the light and truth. He went to where a few of the Lord's people met together to read and feed upon the green pastures and still waters of His own word. He saw the truth—that the Lord's people should be a separate people from the world and the unconverted, and that they should be gathered together around the Lord Jesus at His table, where He has promised to be *Himself* in the midst. But this is the place where Satan, above all things, dislikes to see Christians, and will hinder them in every possible way from

being there. He will allow them to own any other name and centre but "Jesus only."

So with poor Robert. He differed with one of the Lord's people about something or other, and allowed this personal matter to turn him entirely away from the truth. He forgot that he was responsible to God for the truth God had shown to him. Oh, how readily our natural self would catch at the least excuse, helped on by Satan, to turn our back upon God, and to allow the light to become darkness! And oh, how great is that darkness of soul out of the light! It is an awful thing to trifle with God's truth. But Robert was God's child, and He in grace and fatherly care laid His hand on him, and stopped him.

During the early part of his illness Satan buffeted him, and all was sad darkness of soul and distress. He was indeed afflicted, and drew near unto the gates of death; but when he cried unto the Lord in his trouble, He sent His word, and healed him. The pain of body was no less, but he had the presence of the blessed Lord Jesus with him to comfort him, and He was true to His word—"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." (Isa. xliii. 2.) Robert sought grace to bear his terrible pain patiently. He entreated those around him to come to Christ, who were still strangers to His salvation, and on the broad road to destruction. He warned Christians not to neglect opportunities, but to be faithful. If it had been the Lord's will that he should get better, his purpose was to act on the blessed truth God had shown him. But the opportunity and privilege had passed for Robert to do so; the Lord took him home.

As I stood by that open coffin, and looked on the now calm features of him who had suffered so much pain, I thought of the time when I should again see that face and body changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body. The contrast would be greater than that between the beautiful and pure white flowers which lay on his coffin and the dark brown bulbs and roots from which they sprang.

Dear reader, may the above be indeed a warning to you. If still a sinner, unsaved, remember that God's light of the glorious gospel is shining now, and you *are* responsible *to* God for its acceptance or its rejection.

If a saint, beware of allowing anything to hinder you from acting on God's truth. You *are* responsible to God, not to man. J. R. W.

REST FOR *YOU*.

DEAR friend, may I ask you, affectionately but earnestly, "Have you got rest?" I do not mean rest for your body. That is a thing we all know how to value and appreciate, none more so perhaps than the tired mother, with the many children to see to, and the press of work to be got through. Ah, how the thought of perfect rest for the heart would cheer such an one!

And this is the rest so freely, so lovingly offered; and offered by One who knew all the depth of *unrest* sin would bring in. Listen to His words, and, oh, may they be a message just from Himself, the Lord Jesus, to you: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. xi. 28.)

With all your sins, all your wretchedness, all your trouble, He wants you to come. Why? To upbraid you? To tell you He will help you to get the load of your sins off? Ah, no; this is not like our precious Saviour! He wants to *give* you the rest He won on that bitter cross, when the load of sin was laid on Him. You have but to come just as you are, and take what He gives. Then you will know that

"All your sins were laid upon Him,
Jesus bore them on the tree;
God, who knew them, laid them on Him,
And, believing, you are free."

Oh, if you could but know the intense joy of resting your soul for eternity on this loving Saviour, who has pledged His word that those who come to Him He will in no wise cast out, you would not run the risk of putting off coming another hour, especially in the face of that one awful view of eternity we get in Rev. xiv. 11, where it says, "They have *no rest* day nor night."

Think of it, dear friend—a place where for ever and ever "they have no rest;" never, in this life, to have come, with your weary load of sins, to the One who was waiting to give you rest; and then, through the long, long, never-ending eternity, to have your portion with those who have "no rest day nor night."

Can you bear the thought? Oh, be warned in time! You may never have a "to-morrow" to come to Jesus.

Face the question this very day, of where your soul is resting, so that you may be able to say—

"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad."

M.

EXTRACT.

HE appeared *once* in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. That work is finished. It can never be added to, nor taken away from. Its value does not change. But the Spirit of God works in us to show us our need of it; makes us see that we are sinners, that we are *lost* in ourselves; leads us (perhaps by deep and painful convictions) to the sense that there is *no* good in us, that when even to will is present with us, how to perform that which is good we find not. We find not only that we have sinned, but that there is a law of sin in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin in our members. But when—really humbled about this, and convicted in our own hearts, removing all pretensions of righteousness in ourselves—we turn to Christ, we find that He has died for this, that He has been a sacrifice for sin, as for the sins that burdened us—has been made sin for us, has put it away for us by the sacrifice of Himself.

Thus we get peace and liberty of heart before God, because the sin is put away between us and Him; Christ has made a full expiation. Sin does not exist as between God and us.

When *He* looks on the blood of Christ He cannot see sin in the believer, because when Christ shed that blood He put it away. Thus we get liberty and power too, because submitting thus to the righteousness of God, having Christ for our righteousness, we are sealed with the Spirit, which gives us power and shows us Christ, so that we get strength and joy, and are able to glorify Him.

J. N. D.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

TREASURES.

TREASURES are various, and their value according to our estimation. We speak of treasures in the deep, treasures hid in the sand, treasures in the heart of the earth, treasures of science, and so on.

Or a man may speak of his vast accumulation of money in a bank, and call such his treasure. A mother folds her babe in her arms, and calls it her treasure. A little child directs your attention to his toys and books, and calls such his treasure. All valued in their way, but, alas! none of them are lasting! Earthquakes, floods, and failures remove the banks, death takes the child, destruction follows the books, and where are the treasures?

Dear reader, have you felt the loss of treasures? and is your heart open to receive a lasting one?

"There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise." The Treasure is *Christ;* the dwelling of the wise is *His home.* Are you wanting Him? You may have Him. He invites you to come.

A few weeks ago I was walking along a road on the coast of Suffolk, when I was accosted with the following words by a countryman whom I had never met before: "M——, I have something to tell you. There is a poor old man down at L—— who has lost his treasure. He had managed to

lay by from his hard earnings the sum of twenty-eight pounds. He hid his money in two wheat-stacks, and the other night the wheat-stacks were burnt down, and his money was lost in the fire."

"Poor man!" I exclaimed. "And what did he do?"

"Why, he cried aloud, and refused to be comforted."

"Well, my good man," I said, "I must tell you of my great treasure."

"Have you got one, then?"

"Yes, I've got a treasure that cannot be destroyed—no fire can burn, no flood drown, no circumstance shake, even death can have no dominion over my treasure."

"You must surely mean the Lord God Almighty?"

"My friend, my Treasure is Christ—God's beloved Son—who is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He has been upon this earth and suffered a shameful death upon the cross, and it was then that He bore the punishment of my sins, as of all who believe upon Him.

"Do you wonder at my calling the Lord Jesus my Treasure? You would not if you knew Him. The more one thinks of Him, the more is one amazed at the exceeding beauty and riches and glory that are in Him! Listen to His words, 'Riches and honour are with Me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.' (Prov. viii. 18, 19.) Is not Christ worth having?"

"Yes, He is, and I'm doing my best to obtain Him."

"What is your best?"

"I fall down upon my knees ten or twelve times every day, and say my prayers."

"And you think to win salvation in that way?"

"Yes. I know God is merciful, and I am no scholar; I am also poor and old, therefore I hope when my time arrives to die, that He will accept the best I can give Him."

"My friend, you will never get God's great gift by any of your doings. God has shown His great mercy to man in sending His own Son into this dark world. You have heard how He walked this earth, as never man did or could, glorifying His Father in every step He took. Perfect goodness was within Him, as His every word, look, and act expressed. How kind was He to all who needed Him. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, cast out devils, blessed the children, and raised the dead. But what was the end of His course? Had not He a right to go straight up to His Father's house? He had. Why then did He let wicked hands take Him and nail Him to a tree? Did not His murderers deserve that dreadful death? They did deserve it, and more—endless banishment from God's holy presence. Jesus knew God's will. He knew that wicked man, poisoned by receiving the devil's lie, could never stand blameless before His just and holy presence. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' Jesus took the sinner's place, was made *sin*, and offered to God an atonement for *sins*. His murderers could not have touched Him apart from God's will. Why do I tell you all this? Because I want you to see that God can have nothing to do with a poor, guilty sinner, apart from the blood-shedding of His well-beloved Son.

"If you want to partake of the mercy of God you must have it entirely apart from all your works, through the work done upon Calvary's

cross. Give up all your poor, wretched thoughts and doings. Go to the Saviour, and tell Him you have nothing but your sins to bring Him; tell Him your treasures of wickedness profit nothing, but that it is written, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin.' Believe it, and you will enter into life which is eternal."

God knows the result of the above conversation with the countryman, but I record it for the reader, feeling assured that God would speak a word to others through the treasure in the wheat-stacks.

Let us look at the Lord's words in Matt. vi. 19, 20, 21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your *treasure* is, there will your heart be also." Read also Mark x. 17–22. There again He speaks of "*treasure* in heaven." In Luke xii. 21, "treasure for himself."

Christian reader, you are a part of His treasure. He gave up His life, yea, all that He had, to purchase you. (Matt. xiii. 44–46.) Does your heart respond to His priceless love? Think of Him in wisdom's form. He speaks: "That I may cause those that love Me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures." (Prov. viii. 21.) Does He not mean to tell you that He will give you something infinitely superior to whatever belongs to earth? Are you empty enough to be filled? Are you passing through trial and affliction? See His love in them as preparations to fill your treasures. Do not be content with simply knowing you are saved from hell and are going to heaven.

Wonderful knowledge as that is, there is infinitely more to know than the blessed work of our Lord and Saviour. "That I may know Him," said the apostle. Ah! there is treasure! Again, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. ii. 3.) Seek and search as for hid treasure (Prov. ii.), and your labour will surely have its reward.

Be my reader saint or sinner, high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, young or old, he will never get anything worth having apart from Christ. God is satisfied with His Son's precious work, has raised Him from the dead, seated Him at His own right hand, and sent down the Holy Spirit, who is ever ready to reveal both Christ's work and His person to any who really want Him. How God delights in Christ, and soon too He will make it manifest to every creature in heaven, earth, and under the earth, but none need wait for that day of glory to enjoy God's treasure.

"The heavens are opened now!
Sound it through earth abroad;
And we by faith in heaven behold
Jesus, the Christ, our Lord."

E. E. S.

"IT HAS CLEANSED ME."

A FEW months ago I heard of the illness of a girl with whom I had a very slight acquaintance, and knowing that two sisters of hers a short time before had died of consumption, I thought she might be going the same way. I had a great desire to speak to her, for I feared she was unconverted, but I knew it would be difficult to see her, owing to the peculiar reticence of manner of all the house-

hold. So I made it a subject of prayer to God, and resolved to visit her. I knew she was very dangerously ill, and yet I put it off for several days. I did not know why. One day, when going home from my work for dinner, I determined I would make an effort to see her. I went across the street towards the door of her house, and as I got to the door her brother came out. I asked him how his sister was, and strange to say, she had just told him that if he saw me he was to ask me in to speak to her. I felt it was all of God, and was delighted He had made it so easy for me. I felt confident He was going to bless her. I went upstairs and found her gasping for breath. I saw her days were numbered. When she saw me she said, "Oh, I am so glad to see you! I have been very desirous of having a conversation with you." I said, "I am very sorry to see you like this, Rachel; you are evidently not going to be here long."

"I am dying," she said.

"Are you ready to meet God?" I asked.

"No, no," she answered; "I am not ready to meet Him, and I am dying. I am afraid to meet God. Oh, I am afraid to meet Him!"

"What is it," I asked, "makes you afraid to die?"

"Because I am a great sinner, and am not fit to meet Him."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Rachel," I said. "God has in His goodness and mercy been showing you your true condition as a sinner in His presence."

"I am a great sinner!" she exclaimed. "I am not ready to die."

She had lived a very moral, upright life, but

God had begun to work, and her eyes were opened to her true condition. I asked her if she knew how a sinner could be saved. She said she knew Christ had died for sinners, but that had not saved her. She had been praying and crying to God for mercy, but still she felt she was not fit to die. I asked her to listen while I read her a few passages from God's word. I read her the following passages: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.) She listened eagerly. Light was beginning to dawn upon her. She grew quiet, and said, "Is it by believing on Jesus a person gets everlasting life—is that all?" "Yes," I said; "listen, and I will show you why that is all. We have all sinned against a holy God, and deserve to go to hell on account of our sins; but God in His infinite love and mercy sent His Son to bear all the wrath that was due to us. Christ came in lowly grace and took our place upon the cross. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. And the proof that God is entirely satisfied, yea glorified, is, that He has raised from the dead the One who bore them, and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly glory. And now the One

who bore our sins on the cross is in heaven without one of them, having put them all away. Before I go," I said, "I will quote you two passages of Scripture. The first is, 'Without shedding of blood is no remission.'" (Heb. ix. 22.) She saw clearly, that there could be no forgiveness without the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The next is, 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' (1 John i. 7.) Now, I said, "surely that is enough for you." "Oh," she exclaimed, "thank God, I see it now. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth us from all sin. It has cleansed me this day." Her heart was filled with joy, and so was mine. She repeated the passage over and over again, always adding, "It has cleansed me." I left her in her new-found joy, and when I came back again in the evening she had got the passage written in large letters, and had pinned it up with her own hands beside her on the wall. The first thing she said when I entered was, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth us from all sin. It has cleansed me this day." From that time till she died she was constantly talking about the precious blood. Just a few minutes before she breathed her last she said, "The precious blood has cleansed me." Then she put her hand up to her forehead and said, "Tell me, my soul, can this be death?" and fell asleep.

Dear reader, how is it with you? Has the precious blood cleansed you, or are you still in your sins? There is a moment coming when you must meet God. The only standing-ground is the precious blood of Christ. If you meet Him in your sins, the lake of fire will be your everlasting portion. I beseech you, ere it be too late, to take

your true place before God as a confessed sinner, owning your unworthiness and guilt, and God can meet you and save you. If you take this place before Him, you can say, like this dear girl of whom you have been reading, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth us from all sin. It has cleansed me."

"I hear the words of love,
God looks upon the blood,
Accepts the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God."

J. McF.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST.

THE preciousness of Jesus' blood
An angel's tongue could never tell;
None but the Infinite conceives
The value that doth in it dwell.
But this I know, Christ's precious blood
Has saved and brought me nigh to God.

Compared with it the wealth of earth
Contemptible must e'er appear;
Ten thousand worlds, with all their store,
From one offence could never clear.
But Jesus' precious blood alone
Doth for my numerous sins atone.

'Twas when my sins against me rose,
A catalogue of darkest hue,
And works had failed to give me peace,
That Jesus' blood arose in view.
Most wondrously it met my case,
For every sin it did efface.

The chief of sinners it has cleansed,
So there are none that need despair;
The sins of crimson it removes,
And makes the soul exceeding fair.
So fair, that God Himself can see
Nought but unsullied purity. C. H.

"READY TO PERISH."

DEUT. xxvi. 5.

THESE words describe, not only the condition of the forefather of the children of Israel, but that of every unconverted man, woman, and child alive in the world. They do not describe the state of those who have passed away in their sins. They may be said to *have* perished. To perish is to be finally lost. I say finally, because lost by itself sets forth the present state of the unbeliever. It is a most solemn fact, that the word of God declares that man is already lost; not that those who have died are lost, but the living ones are lost. Those who have died in unbelief have perished. Those alive are lost, and they are ready to perish. Now the word ready signifies an immediate thing, that which requires no further preparation, and thus it aptly describes the condition of man by nature. Being already lost, there is nothing further to be done in order to his perishing. It is only the longsuffering of God, who is not willing that any should perish, who gave His Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, that hinders the thing being an accomplished fact. My unsaved reader, do you believe this? Do you confess that those three words describe your own personal condition? I thank God if you have learnt this much; but it is a fact, whether you believe it or not. It is of great importance to remember that, whether you believe it or not; it makes no difference save to yourself; it makes an immense difference as to you, but not as to the fact. A man may be

calmly floating in a boat down a river towards the rapids, and be in great danger. He may not know it, but the fact remains; he may not believe it even if told of it, but the fact is not altered by that. Men say it does not matter what you believe provided you are sincere; but it is all a delusion. If the man in the boat does believe he is in danger it makes a difference to him in this way—he may escape; that is, provided there is a way of escape, which in the case of a sinner there is. Blessed be God for having provided it. But just as the man in the boat would scorn all assistance unless he believed himself in danger, so does the sinner neglect—to put it in its mildest form—the precious gospel of God, which is His power to salvation, unless he believes he is ready to perish. It has no value in his eyes. His belief, I repeat, does not alter the fact; but it makes a great difference to him. This belief is what is called in the Scriptures repentance, and is a thing that God insists upon. Unless there is repentance, faith is of no value; it is merely mutual assent. Repentance, in short, is the soul really owning that it is—in the words of the text—"ready to perish." Think, my unsaved reader, of what a terrible thing it is to perish, and thank God for His mercy in sparing you until now. Lost you are indeed, but you have not perished yet. Does perish mean to be annihilated? Man says so; but what saith the Lord? One word from Him is worth ten thousand words from man. Now God says in His Word that the punishment of the wicked is eternal, as eternal as is His own being, as eternal as the blessing of the saved. The same word is used of all three. Which are we to believe—God or man? I trust, dear reader, you will say

God. It is safe ground to believe Him, and He has spoken in the Scriptures. We may be quite sure that what He says is right. It is the only thing that can give confidence. No one can go wrong who simply takes God at His word. Ready to perish, ready to go into an eternal hell. Oh, pause, sinner, and think! Be wise. "The prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished." But will believing this save the soul? No, nothing that man believes about himself can save him. The man in the boat may believe he is on the verge of the rapids, but that will not save him, and yet he cannot be saved unless he does believe. Repentance is believing something about myself, but this is not the gospel. We must repent *and* believe the gospel. The gospel is glad tidings; the gospel speaks of God's Son and of His finished work, not of me and of my sinful works. There is no gospel in announcing the solemn fact that man is ready to perish, but this prepares the way for it. May God lead your heart, dear reader, to repentance, even by these few lines, and thus prepare you for the other side, the blessed side, of our subject.

"READY TO SAVE."

Isa. xxxviii. 20.

This is a glorious fact, and is asserted of the Lord. It is the Lord who is ready to save. Of the sinner it is stated that he is ready to perish. Note the difference between the two statements of Scripture —two divinely-revealed facts that man's belief or unbelief does not alter. One is about the sinner,

the other is about the Lord. The one, if received, produces repentance; the other, if received, produces faith. Faith is, unlike repentance, believing something about another, not about myself. Now the gospel reveals that God is ready to save. Do you believe this, my reader? Supposing you have accepted the first of our two facts, that you are ready to perish, and have done so on the simple ground that God says so, do you now receive this on the same simple ground? Do you believe that the Lord is as ready to save as you are ready to perish? You may do so, for it is true. What a comfort it must be for your soul if you do! How beautifully do these two scriptures answer the one to the other! How the truth that the Lord is ready to save meets the truth that the sinner is ready to perish! Well, this is the gospel; this is the good news. And it is good news to the sinner who feels he is ready to perish, and feels because he believes, not believes because he feels.

Mark here again the beautiful force of the word ready. The Lord is ready because there is nothing more to be done to make Him ready. It is an immediate attitude. It does not say He *will* be ready at some future time. This would imply that He is not ready now. The plain, simple, unvarnished statement is, that He is ready. And He is ready in two ways. He is ready as to His affections for the perishing one. The heart of God yearns over the sinner. He desires his salvation. Ah! even more than the sinner does when he is awakened, slow as we all are to believe it, yet it is true. God—mark God, not Christ only—but God loved us when we were sinners. He does not make sinners into saints and then love them.

No; He loves them being yet sinners. This is beautifully set forth by the kiss the father gave the prodigal son. He gave it when he was in all the rags and filth of the far-off place. He did not clean him, and put the best robe on him, and bring him into the house, and then kiss him. Oh, no! the kiss was the first thing, all the rest flowed from the love. Well, God is ready to save as to the disposition of His heart towards the one ready to perish, but this is not all, nor enough; for we can easily understand how a person might be ready to save as to his will, his love, his desire, but be powerless to help. Much as God might love the sinner, the love of God alone could not save him; for there was the great question of sin to be righteously settled. But the good news is that He is ready to save. As to His ability to save, He is like a man standing by the river side with a rope to fling to the man gliding down the stream to the rapids. Of what use would a man be to stand on the banks of the river longing to rescue the poor perishing soul, more and more rapidly approaching destruction, but with no means of saving. He could not be said to be ready in the full sense of the word. But God is. The work of Christ on Calvary's cross has made Him ready to save. As to His power, He can save, and righteously save, for if He could not save righteously, He would not save at all. But think, my reader, the Son of man had to be lifted up for this. Read carefully John iii. 14, 15, 16. There you will see the double readiness of God to save. If God loved, it was equally true that the Son of man *must* be (we can now say has been) lifted up. Poor, weary, anxious soul, do you believe this of God? It is a simple

fact presented to you for your acceptance. But will believing this save you? Well, not exactly; for the faith that saves is not merely believing something about a person, but believing on Him; in other words, trusting Him. But I am sure of this, that if you do really believe that He is willing to save, you *will* trust Him. You will just let go everything you are clinging to, and let Him save you. Yes, *let* Him save you. Just keep quiet, and let Him have His own way, and He will save you. "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." And if you trust Him, fully trust Him, you will be happy, and know that all is right for time and eternity. Faith must be in a living person. It is not *what* you have to believe, but *whom*.

There is just one word more for the careless and indifferent. The Lord is also ready to judge. (1 Peter iv. 5.) This is another solemn fact. And it is the same Lord who is ready to save now that is ready to judge then. And He will be as perfect as a Judge as He is perfect as a Saviour now. But He will only take His place as Judge when men force Him to judge by rejecting His salvation.

X. T. M.

"WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT?"

Isaiah liii.

WONDROUS tidings brought to earth,
Telling of a Saviour's birth;
Wondrous grace bestowed on man,
Purposed ere the world began.

Dull the ear to hear the news,
Man could God's own Son refuse;
Born to tabernacle here,
God in man to men come near.

Wondrous path the Saviour trod,
In Him all the love of God
Manifested in that life—
Perfect midst all human strife.

Yet man's heart, so dead and cold,
Nothing in Him could behold
Of the beauty shining there,
Naught of God's delight could share.

Scorned, despised, and set at nought,
Rebel man in love He sought;
Broken hearts in Him could find
Pow'r and sympathy combined.

None cast out who to Him came
(He is evermore the same);
Few would prove the glorious worth
Of the Son of God on earth.

Now from heaven again He speaks,
Still His love the lost one seeks;
Waiting yet to freely bless
All who *now* His name confess.

Reader, hast thou heard His voice?
Dost thou in His love rejoice?
Say, is He thy Saviour *now*?
Does your heart before Him bow?

Soon the day of grace will close,
Ushering in a night of woes;
Soon the judgment-seat He'll take,
Rebel man before Him quake.

Then, indeed, proud man *must* bow
To the One he heeds not now;
Jesus Lord must own at last,
When the day of grace is past.

S. M. A.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

NO NOVELS IN HEAVEN.

A YOUNG person stepped into a train the other day, and, like many more who have no better way of passing the time, began reading a novel. The only other occupant of the compartment was a servant of the Lord, who presently said to her, "Will you allow me to ask you a question? Would you like to go to heaven?"

"Oh, yes," she replied. "Of course, we all hope to go there."

"But," said the other, "there are no novels in heaven. Have you ever thought of that?"

"No," she said, with a laugh.

"Then what would you do without your novels? Do you think you would be happy there?"

"I suppose all will be happy there."

"But there are no novels in heaven," her fellow-traveller repeated.

"Well, I don't see what harm there can be in reading a novel."

"I am not saying there is any harm in it; but all I say is that there are no novels in heaven, and I am afraid you would find nothing there to suit you."

"Well, I shall certainly read this book. I have begun it, and mean to finish it."

"By all means read it if you can ask God's blessing on it. But will you promise me that you will do that before you read it?"

"Yes, I will," she replied, somewhat to the surprise of her companion, who answered,

"Well, I don't know what the book is. I only know it is a 'yellow-back,' and they are not generally good for much. Is there anything of Christ in it?"

"Not much."

After a considerable pause the Christian said, "I am afraid that God and you are not agreed about Christ. God thinks *everything* of Christ, and you seem to think very little of Him. All in heaven are agreed about Christ, and you may be sure God will not have anyone there who is not of the same mind. He does not want to deprive you of a single pleasure. He wants to give you something better than you have, and I want you to see that there is nothing in heaven suited to your present tastes; and that therefore, if you are ever to get there, you must have a new nature altogether—a nature suited to the place. "*Ye must be born again.*" (John iii. 7.)

The young person seemed very unwilling to be spoken to, and kept looking out of the window, wishing, no doubt, to get back to the novel; but she paid sufficient respect to what was said to leave it unopened for the rest of the journey.

"I know," said the other, "you would rather I did not continue the subject, and yet I believe that if you thought you were going to die you would like me to talk to you."

"Yes, I should," she replied.

"Well, when are you going to die? You might die to-night. After the warning you have had it

might cost you your soul to read that book; and if you valued your soul you would pitch the book out of the window, that you might not be tempted to look at it again."

"I could not do that, for it is not my property; it is only lent me."

"Well, I entreat you to allow nothing to cheat you of heaven. God wants to have you in heaven, and the devil will try all he can to keep you from it; he will get you engrossed in novels or *anything* to shut out the thought of eternity. You have given me no evidence whatever of being a child of God; I fear you are in your sins. If so, and you die as you are, you will certainly go down to an everlasting hell. Forgive my apparent rudeness, but I must speak plainly, it would not be kindness to do otherwise. You have eternity before you. Where are you going to spend it? God loved you so much that He sent His own Son to die for you. Christ loved you so much that He was willing to take your place, and bear the penalty due to your sins; and you have *never thanked* Him for it, now, have you?"

"Well, I shall think over what you say, and—"

Here the train stopped.

Now possibly the reader may say, "Why so much about novels? Is it a greater sin to read a novel than to do many other things?"

By no means. But the point is this—that whether it be a novel, a newspaper, a pipe, the social glass, the idle gossip, or the pursuit of refined pleasures, scientific research, music, the arts, or any of the thousand and one things that are regarded as harmless in themselves, whatever you find suited to your natural tastes, be they vulgar or refined, ignorant or enlightened, *none*

of these things are to be found in heaven; and you are not to suppose that any change will come over your tastes *after* you leave this world, so that you would enjoy *then* what you do not enjoy *now*, or be happy then without the things that you consider essential to your happiness now.

The presence of Christ fills all heaven, and if you prefer the so-called harmless things or innocent amusements of the world to Christ, it proves that you are not *fit* for heaven, as regards your nature, and you never will be unless, *before you leave this world*, you are born again.

You *must* be born again; otherwise you have only the nature of a sinner—the nature of the man who hid from God amongst the trees of the garden, because he could not be at ease in the presence of perfect holiness. And therefore heaven would be simply intolerable to *you*.

Be assured, dear friend, that on leaving this world we shall each of us go "to his own place." It was said of Judas he went "to his own place," and of the apostles they "departed to their own company," and if you are not at home with Christ on earth, or in any company with whom He can say, "There am I," you will not hereafter find your "own place" amid that radiant throng whom He has purchased with His blood, and made fit for His presence, and to whom His promise is, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that *where I am*, there ye may be also." (John xiv. 2, 3.)

"What then am I to do," you say, "in order to get to heaven? Must I give up all these things—not only the things that are positively wrong, but all these harmless things?"

My dear friend, you have not to give up *one* of them; but if you have discovered that you are not fit, either by nature or practice, for the holy presence of God and the Lamb, simply fall down before God and tell Him what you are—a lost sinner. "Behold, I am vile!" "Woe is me! for I am undone." Then, if you trust in the precious blood of Christ, shed on Calvary, and sprinkled, as it were, on the very throne of God, He will assure you of eternal forgiveness, and you will find yourself possessed of a new nature—a nature which delights in the things of God, of Christ, and of heaven, and a heart capable of "giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us *meet* to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." (Col i. 12.)

New tastes, desires, and pursuits accompany the possession of this new and "divine nature" in the child of God; and if these are cultivated by occupation with Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the *old* nature will not be allowed to assert itself (though it is in us to the end), and many things will *drop off* which we had no power to *give up* before we came to Christ.

"Slave of sin and Satan, come to Jesus NOW."

E. B. G.

EXTRACTS.

"THE power of death is a wonderful weapon to move a poor sinner's heart, and grace a sweet sound to win it for God and His Christ." A.

"WHAT crooked sticks are found bound up in the bundle of life, but the crooked shall be made straight." G.

THE COMING JUDGMENT.

Read LUKE xvii. 22-37.

WHAT little credit men give to the solemn truth that the Son of God is coming again, coming as the world's Judge.

And yet the word of God sounds the alarm in hundreds of passages, in terms of solemn, urgent warning.

Will the world be prepared to meet Him at His coming? No; the world will be unprepared, and Jesus, rejected and despised in the day of grace, will come suddenly to fetch His redeemed, and to bring judgment as the portion of His despisers.

When on earth, He foretold as follows, the state of the world at His second coming: "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." "Likewise also AS it was in the days of Lot,... EVEN THUS shall it be when the Son of man is revealed."

How was it with men in Noah's day?

Jesus says, "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, UNTIL the day that Noe entered into the ark, *and the flood came, and destroyed them all.*"

That was it; the indifference of the doomed world continued up to the very day that Noah entered into the ark, and then the flood came, *and destroyed them all.* "EVEN THUS shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

The world before the flood was steeped in sin and corruption, and God in very righteousness was compelled to judge it; but He did not hide

from men His purpose of judgment. Noah, His servant, preached it, and the very act of the latter in building the ark was a testimony to the world that judgment was coming.

But what effect had the preaching and the building upon men? None whatever. They doubtless listened to the preacher, but His words were as an idle tale; they doubtless watched him with a curious eye as he steadily worked at his ark, and thought him a fool for his pains; for neither the preaching nor the building stopped the eating and drinking, the marrying and giving in marriage—these, and the world's mirth, continued without interruption through the years of God's long-suffering *right up to the very day* that Noah entered the ark, and then—well, what then? Why, the word that had been preached for a hundred and twenty years received its awful fulfilment. *The flood came*, and those miserable men and women who, when it was too late, would have given everything for another moment of God's long-suffering, were swept away by His judgment into a lost eternity.

As it was before the flood, so is it now; the word of God is proclaimed to a world of sinners, but the word preached *now* is more wonderful than that preached *then*. God in marvellous grace has sent an offer of pardon, salvation, and eternal life into this world of lost sinners. He has not hidden the fact that a day of judgment is at hand, but in view of that He has prepared a salvation which He is offering for the acceptance of all.

And the ground and basis of this salvation is still more marvellous, for it is the atoning death, on the cross of Calvary, of Jesus, His only-begotten

and well-beloved Son. Yes, when nothing else would suffice to put away sin, the Son of God came to earth to put it away by the sacrifice of Himself; and founded on that work, on that precious blood of atonement that flowed from His pierced side, is God's offer of pardon to sinners who deserve only judgment.

God points men and women to Jesus as the object of faith, as the only ark of safety. His word to them is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

And what is the attitude of the great mass of mankind towards this stupendous exhibition of God's love? *Indifference.* Men listen with dull, careless ears to the tale of the cross. They lend a tacit assent to the fact that God's Son died to save sinners, and that is all. They go on with their eating and drinking, their marrying and giving in marriage, their pleasures, their politics, and their business, supremely indifferent to the awful fact that the moment *will* come when God's offer of salvation will be withdrawn, and His judgment be poured out upon this world.

Just as in Noah's time, during the 120 years of God's long-suffering, while the ark was preparing, men ridiculed the idea of coming judgment; so now, in spite of the testimony of the Scriptures, in spite of the strivings of the Spirit, in spite of the preaching of God's servants, scoffers on every hand are saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter iii. 4.)

But we have the testimony of the Son of God, that just as the indifference of men continued up to the very day that Noah entered into the ark,

right up to the very day the flood came *and destroyed them all*, so will the indifference of men in this dispensation continue to the very day when He comes to the world in judgment.

Again, Jesus teaches by another of God's past judgments what His judgment in the future will be, and what the state of the world when the judgment comes. He says, "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot . . . even thus shall it be in the days when the Son of man is revealed."

How was it with men in Lot's day?

Jesus says, "They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; *but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.*"

It was a day of progress and of commercial activity, as well as of sinful pleasure. "They bought and sold, they planted and builded." Judgment coming? Nonsense! who ever heard of such a thing? Besides, there was no time to think of such matters. Sodom and Gomorrah had a great future before them; under the energy of their inhabitants they were thriving places; *and meanwhile their awful sin rose up before the God of heaven, and the invisible cloud of His approaching judgment hovered over and encircled the cities of enterprise and progress.* And the night came when His angels visited Sodom; and the men, unrepentant of their sin, and all unconscious of their awful doom, strove to add to their huge accumulation of iniquity. And the morning came when the angels dragged lingering Lot out of the doomed city, *and then* the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and

fire from heaven; and He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. And Jesus said, "As it was in the days of Lot,... EVEN THUS shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

How suddenly the judgments came at the last! Things went on as usual in Noah's time, *until* the day that he entered the ark, and then, without sign or warning, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. The long-threatened flood had come, and all outside of the ark perished.

The sin and pleasure and business of Sodom and Gomorrah continued up to the very moment of the judgment. Security was stamped upon everything around; no thought of judgment harassed those sinners. We read that when Lot urged his sons-in-law to get up out of the place, for that the Lord would destroy the city, he seemed as one that mocked. The darkness of night was chased away by the bright beams of the rising sun, everything looked smiling and prosperous, when suddenly God speaks. The fire and brimstone descend from His hand of judgment, and speedily Sodom and Gomorrah are a heap of ruins, and their inhabitants charred and blackened corpses.

How will He come? do you ask? As suddenly and as swiftly as a flash of lightning, sinner. *So* suddenly, that if you are on earth then, you will not have time to call out, "Lord, have mercy upon me." "*For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven;* SO SHALL *also the Son of man be in His day.*"

When will He come? do you ask? No man knoweth, not even the angels, only the Father. He *may* come before you have read this paper; and when He *does* come, it will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; so suddenly, so swiftly, that there will be no time for preparation. If you are not ready at His coming, *you will be lost for ever.*

This is the day of God's long-suffering. In His marvellous love for sinners He desires that none should perish, and in spite of the world's indifference to this love, manifested for centuries since the cross, He still pleads with men; yea, is pleading with *you,* my unsaved reader. Has it ever dawned upon your soul that God gave Jesus to die for *you?* that He wants to have *you* to dwell with Himself in His bright home of joy and glory? that He is offering to make you fit for this place by cleansing you from your sins in the blood of Jesus?

Whether you know it or not, dear reader, it is nevertheless true; and we urge you, as you love your soul, we plead with you by the fast approaching judgment, to avail yourself instantly of this unspeakable mercy, and to come unto God as a perishing sinner, and receive salvation from Him through faith in Jesus.

"I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field. the one shall be taken, and the other left."

"Verily I say unto you, Heaven and earth shall pass away, *but my word shall not pass away.*" (Matthew xxiv.) W. H. S.

A UNITARIAN CONVERTED TO GOD.

THE writer was a moral young man, with great pretensions to religion and good works, and believing that God's way to heaven was to be good; when reading the word of God he judged it by his reason, and received it not as the revelation of God Himself to tell him of the Saviour which His love had provided for him. He often read it, and turned off its keen edge and applied it to others; often despised those who believed Christ to be their Saviour. He believed Him only to be a moral Teacher, and raised up by God to be an example for man to follow.

He came to London, and having heard what a place it was, his own opinions as to his morality and good works were his comfort and stay. Not long after, having a situation there, a Christian came to him one morning and asked him where he attended on Sundays, when he told him that he was a Freethinker. The Christian answered, "I thought you were a Christian." He asked him if he believed in the new birth, and he told him that he did. He afterwards thought, What does the new birth mean? He read John iii., but could not by his talents, nor his reasonings understand it. It seemed to be something very dark, and the two "musts" dropped with solemnity on his ears.

He was about six weeks in a state of perplexity; attended Bible readings, and went to chapel twice almost every Sunday; and the Lord brought John iii. thrice before him in that

time, and it was God's means of arousing him to a sense of his spiritual state. He thought once of throwing himself into the Thames. He was about three weeks in this consciously lost condition, without Christ, and without the knowledge of God. He had in a measure given up his own ideas by this time, and was very dissatisfied with himself, and listened with great eagerness to the preacher he heard every Sunday, who preached nothing but morality, good works, science, and various forms of man's theology.

One Sunday night, after coming home from chapel, he heard others saying what a happy day they had spent, but thought it had been just the opposite with him; and being amongst those who were Christians, they had a prayer meeting, and they prayed to God for him. After the prayer meeting he said he would give everything to know the truth. What did he give up? His own opinions, that which hindered him from being blessed. When praying that night he knew he was speaking to God; he never knew it before. In the morning he told his friends he was saved, and knew his sins were all forgiven, and that he had received the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Being a Unitarian, his great stumbling-block was his own idea of the person of the Son of God, which kept him far away from God. What convinced him of the truth was, the knowledge of a Person, and that One the eternal Son of God; he was not brought to religion without Christ, but to a living Saviour. If he had held to his own ideas, he would still be treading the sure path to the lake of fire. What use is it trusting to a broken reed, when the Son of God has

accomplished the work of redemption for every sinner that will receive Him? What does the Father say concerning Him after thirty years of private life in this world? "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And again, when rejected by man, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; HEAR YE HIM." S. T.

"IT IS VERY SIMPLE."

A SHORT time ago I was asked to visit a farmer who for some weeks had been unwell, and continued getting worse, the doctor giving no hope of his recovery. He had lived about seventy years in this world, and now he had to leave it. But where was he going?

Like hundreds more, things in connection with this life had so engrossed his attention that he had never weighed the consequences of going his own way, although God plainly states the result of so doing: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: *but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*"

He had not been an immoral man, indeed quite the opposite; a kind husband, an indulgent parent, and generally going to the parish church with his family. Yet he never really had had to do with God. A mere form of going to church had lulled his conscience, and he had been quite satisfied during his lifetime; but now he had to die. A

mere form was no good; and he knew that he must meet God, and he was not ready. Go into the presence of God he must—unprepared! How dreadful! What folly to spend seventy years in this scene, and leave eternity out of his calculation. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. xvi. 26.)

On calling one evening, I found some relatives had come to see him; but I was shown in, and found him evidently alarmed, now that death was staring him in the face; and well he might be, whilst uncertain whether the eternity before him was to be spent in heaven or in hell.

I read to him Rom. iii. 23—"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" and pressed home the fact that he had sinned, and therefore come short of God's standard, and deserved nothing but judgment; then I turned to 1 Tim. i. 15—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation." "Surely all God says is faithful and worthy to be believed by all," I said; "but in connection with this statement, which is really believed by so few, God says specially, it 'is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation;' And now what is this wonderful saying?" I continued. "'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'—mark the words, 'to save,' not to do part of the work, and leave the rest for sinners to do—'Christ Jesus came into the world to save'—to do everything there was to be done, and that for 'sinners.'"

I then quoted some passages to show His work was done. "It is finished." "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." (John xvii. 4.)

"This Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." (Heb. x. 12.) Who "when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb. i. 3.)

"Now you have sinned," said I, "and therefore *you* are a sinner, and God's word declares Christ has finished the work that *saves sinners.* Therefore the living God also says (Rom. x. 9.), 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved.*'"

"Do you not see it?" exclaimed his brother, who had been listening most attentively to all I had been saying, "It is very simple; nothing could be plainer. Christ came to save sinners, and has finished the work, and therefore you have only to believe, and confess, and be saved."

While I was putting the gospel before the dying man, the other believed and was saved.

Reader, will you not do the same? "It is very simple." The word of God says Christ *did* the work, now *you* believe, and confess, and "thou shalt be saved."

As far as I know, the dying man was never saved. If he was not, what an eternity he will spend! Seventy years he had lived in a country where the gospel was preached; then he had to die—alas, unsaved! and be for ever shut out of God's presence in outer darkness.

Reader, is *that* to be *thy* portion for eternity? "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved.*"

J. S. G.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

SALVATION, COMMUNION, BOLDNESS.

1 John iv. 9-19.

"IN this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Here we have love *towards* us for salvation.

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us." Here it is love *in* us for communion.

"Herein is our love [or love with us] made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world." Here it is love *with* us for boldness.

Only saved people can have communion and boldness; so we must first know we are saved.

Reader, do you know you are saved? or are you indifferent?

An unsaved person is found in a twofold state in this scripture. In verse 9 he is dead, needing life; in verse 10 guilty, needing forgiveness.

In these two verses (9, 10) we see the way in which love meets us: first, as dead; secondly, as guilty and responsible sinners.

What need was there for God to send His Son if we were not actually dead in trespasses and sins?

Think of the depth and height, length and breadth, of that love which came right from the heart of God to bring sinners to Himself, in order that He might enjoy them, and they enjoy Him. He gave nothing less than His own Son. What could He give more?

Perhaps some one says, "I don't love God enough."

It is not a question of *your* love to God, it is not upward love, from you to Him, but downward love—right down from His heart into yours. His love must come down to us before ever our love can flow back to Him. "We love Him because He first loved us." Like rain coming down on a summer's day, the drenching showers refresh the earth, and then spring up again in grateful fountains to the very clouds whence they came.

God's love penetrates, saturates, softens our hearts, and then goes back in a fountain of praise and thankfulness to Him whence it came. God will be *first* in love.

Verse 10 shows we are guilty, but God's love meets us. He sends His Son. In John iii. 16 we read, "God *gave* His Son;" but I am free to confess to you that my heart is even more touched by the word "*sent*." Twice it occurs. (*vv.* 9, 10.) Think of the heart He was sent from; think of the One that heart sent; think of the dead, guilty creatures to whom He was sent; think of the twofold object for which He was sent—that the dead might get life, and the guilty have their sins taken away by Him.

What is salvation? It is not merely a feeling or emotion; it is poor, dead sinners getting eternal life as the fruit of God sending His Son; getting

present, conscious salvation through His Son, who has answered for all their liabilities, borne the punishment due to them, and said those three wonderful words, "It is finished."

God's love is *towards* us for salvation, and in that is involved eternal life and forgiveness of sins. That is the first aspect; His love is towards you for your acceptance, and yet you are keeping it out. If you have gone through the streets on a summer's day, when the sun was shining in meridian splendour, pouring its rays on the houses, you may have noticed that, on the side facing south, all the blinds were down and the shutters closed to keep the sun out. If you had gone into those rooms, you would have found them dark, and probably cold. The sun was shining, but the rooms were dark and cold, because the blinds were down, and the shutters shut. The sun of God's love is shining on you in all its splendour, but you have got the blinds of unbelief drawn, the shutters of opposition and bigotry fast closed, and in your heart there is coldness, bondage, and death.

Why is there this coldness of death in your heart? Is it God's fault? No, you are in bondage, but it is the bondage of unbelief.

Draw up the blinds of unbelief, unfasten the shutters of prejudice and bigotry, and let in the warm sunshine of God's love. Then, where all was death, all will be life; where all was guilt, all will be grace; where all was sins, all will be forgiveness; where all was bondage, all will be liberty; where all was darkness, all will be light; where all was hatred, all will be love; where all was the coldness of death, all will be the warmth of the changeless love of God. Let it in! See

what it brings the moment you let it in. Are you going to keep it out to His dishonour, and to your damnation? You will be the loser in time and eternity if you do.

The love of God is towards you, and what does it bring? Eternal life for dead sinners in one hand; present, conscious, eternal forgiveness for guilty sinners in the other hand. Let it in. All the claims of God's nature as light and love were met by His own beloved Son. And the love of God is shown to you by the death of that Son, so that now you can enjoy Him—enjoy what He is in His own nature as light and love.

I know of nothing more wonderful than just to sit in God's presence, knowing that I am an object of His love; loved with the same love as His own Son. Think of being able to say, "God loves me just as He loves His own Son!" (John xvii. 23.) He never will love me more, He never will love me less; what His love was, it is, and ever will be. That is the manner, the measure, the character, the fulness of His love to me. What barrier can stand before it? Come now, does He love you enough?

"Well," you say, "sometimes I think He loves me, and sometimes I think He does not."

When do you think He loves you? "When I am going on right." And when do you think He does not love you? "When I am not going on well."

Then you are wrong. You are measuring God's love to you from your little thimbleful of love to Him, instead of from the shoreless, fathomless ocean of His boundless love to you. He does not love you more when you are right, or love you less when you are wrong. He loves you perfectly. God is the only One who could love perfectly.

You can say to yourself, "He loves me fully, freely, changelessly, perfectly, everlastingly. His love to His own Son is the measure of His love to me."

How could fear remain in the heart of any one who believed this? Supposing I had a glass full of water, how could I get the water out of the glass without touching it? By pouring in something heavier than water. If I poured in quicksilver, the water would be displaced, and the glass, instead of being full of water, would be filled with quicksilver.

Your cold hearts are filled with fear, but the quicksilver of God's love displaces your fear by telling you that He loves you with all His heart. The law says that you are to love God with all your heart. Christ says that God loves you with all His heart. Which is best?

The law will never remove fears, it only engenders them. God was incapable of giving a more magnificent display of His love than by the gift of His own Son. Verse 16 shows how you can make it your own and get all the blessing of verses 9, 10.

Have you *known* God's love to you, poor, weary, trembling, anxious one?

"We have known," but that is in vain without believing. Appropriate it to yourself if you know it. Believe it, and thus make it your own. "We have known *and believed*." How is it known? The Spirit of God has made it known in the word of God, and now we are responsible to believe it and let it in. This verse (16) takes you off your feet and puts you on your face in adoring worship that He loved you after such a fashion. Do not rest content with *knowing* without

believing. Christ offered His blood to God as a propitiation for our sins. All God's claims are perfectly met, and now He can be just, and the justifier of him who believes on Jesus. The Lord give you to know and believe the love of God, so that you may be able to say, "I have eternal life and forgiveness of sins." (1 John ii. 12; v. 13.)

What are we saved for? That we might ultimately go to heaven? God must have some other object in saving us, or He would have taken us to heaven the moment we were converted, and never have left us here where there is the fear of our dishonouring Him. We were fit for heaven the moment we were saved; but God leaves us in this world to bring glory to Himself and to His Son. He might have sent the archangel; but He has left His people to be imitators of Himself and reproductions of Christ here.

Not only has He saved me from my guilt, but He has brought me to Himself. I am brought to God by the death of His Son—made at home and at ease in His presence; so that I may have communion—common thoughts—with God my Father about His Son, my present, personal Saviour.

Verse 12. I feel I can do nothing more than refer you to this verse. It is overwhelming to think of the love of God *in* us.

Now the blinds are up, the shutters back, and the love has come in and taken possession of our hearts. Such depths of precious blessing there are in this verse. Do you know what it is to have communion with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? We have communion with the Father and Son in 1 John i. 3. The writer had fellowship with the Father and

the Son, and if we have fellowship with him we have fellowship with the Father and the Son too.

Fellowship with the Holy Ghost is not mentioned in this epistle, save as the Holy Ghost is the power for communion with the Father and Son.

In 2 Cor. xiii. 14 it is the communion of the Holy Ghost, and communion with saints in 1 John i. 7. God could not have fellowship with us as long as our sins were on us; but the blood removed what hindered; and He takes us by the hand of love and leads us into the light, having made us suitable to it, so that now we can enjoy God, and He can enjoy us.

Does some one say, "It is all very well for you; perhaps you have no children, and you are not in my circumstances. I have communion on the Lord's-day when gathered to Him"?

That is very blessed, but it is not what is meant here. It is possible to have communion with God here in all our circumstances; we have not to wait till we get to the glory. Let me give you an Old Testament illustration—Gen. v. 22-24. We often quote the text, "Enoch walked with God;" but the most important items God gives in Enoch's history are left out. There are several chapters in his history.

Chapter i.: "Enoch walked with God."

Chapter ii.: "He begat sons and daughters." Bless God for those words! He was a family man; yet all the care consequent upon having and bringing up children never disturbed his habit of soul. No doubt his children were as troublesome as ours; they had the same hearts as ours—"deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Enoch's children's hearts manifested

themselves in the same way as our children's hearts do, yet it did not disturb Enoch's walk with God. By walking with God, to bring up his children, he obtained power.

Chapter iii. tells how long he walked with God. It was not a spasmodic or occasional thing. He walked with God three hundred and sixty-five years. God wants us to enjoy communion with Himself all day long, and every day.

Chapter iv. is an echo in part of chapter i., with the marvellous closing words, "And he was not; for God took him." What was the end of his life of communion? He was taken from this scene—"he was not." What does that mean? It means that after he had gone people searched for him to find him, and could not. Thus it will be after we are gone. Think of a child running about in search of its parents, or parents in search of a child. Christ is soon coming to take all His blood-bought, blood-washed ones home. If He should come now, how do you stand in relation to His coming? Are you ready? Have you come to the Saviour? Do not trust your own heart. God says, "He that trusteth his own heart is a fool." Trust His heart. He will save you; and, as a fruit of His everlasting love, you will have communion with Himself, which will go on and on for ever and ever throughout eternity.

Lastly, as to boldness. Love not only gives salvation and produces communion but it makes me as bold as a lion—gives holy boldness. Not the brazen-faced boldness of an impenitent sinner who says he will face the judgment of God and take the consequences. No, it is *holy* boldness. (*v.* 17.) Can you think of judgment with bold-

ness? Can you think of the judgment-seat of Christ, and say—

> "Bold shall I stand in that great day,
> For who aught to my charge shall lay"?

"Herein is love with us made perfect." It is the scene of love. Perfect peace, calmness, tranquillity, and boldness in the day of judgment is the result of this perfection of love.

I sometimes meet people who say, "I am doing the best I can, and trust in the mercy of God in the day of judgment." Then you will go to the lake of fire! There is not an iota of mercy in the day of judgment. This is the day of mercy. The psalmist says, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." If He enters into judgment, He will administer, as an inflexible Judge, nothing but eternal, unbending, righteous judgment. You must meet God as a Saviour-God in the day of grace, or have to do with Him as a Judge-God in eternity, when your sins will be fastened skin-tight on you, and you will carry them away with you to the lake of fire to be your close companions for eternity.

When will you have to do with God—now or then? How will you have to do with God—as a Saviour or a Judge? You must have to do with Him as one or the other. Have to do with Him now, and He will give you boldness in view of coming judgment. If you put it off till eternity, there will be no gift of eternal life for you, no forgiveness of sins, no communion, and, instead of boldness, paleness, loins loosened, knees knocking, standing speechless, as a guilty, condemned sinner, before the great white throne, which you must leave for the lake of fire for ever.

"As He *is*," up there in heaven, at God's right hand, "so are *we* in this world." (*v.* 17.) Not as He *was;* death and judgment, and the forsaking of God were before Him. Thank God, not as He was. Is He free from sins? So are we who believe. Is He free from death? (Rev. i. 18.) So are we. Is He free from judgment? So are we. He has been under the judgment of God, taken the wages of sin, exhausted the cup of God's wrath, emptied it of its dread contents, and now God says, "As He is, so are we." Do you believe it? I do not ask whether you accept Him. Satan might lead you to doubt that; but God has accepted Him, and if you believe that God has accepted Him, for you it says, in Ephesians i. 6, that you are accepted in Him, without any effort on your part. Is He fit for God? So are we. Could God love His Son any more? We are as near, as dear, as beloved as God's Son. This is not state, it is standing. He was without sin absolutely; we shall have His state when He comes; we have His standing now. When He comes, we shall have bodies of glory just like His own. But now we are in Him, free from death and judgment, fit for glory; able to say—

> "Death and judgment are behind us,
> Grace and glory are before."

A dear saint who has gone to the Lord used to sit in his study and sing—

> "John's nine monosyllables, all in a row,
> Are my joy and delight whilst here below."

Look at the nine words of one syllable: "As HE IS, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD." How could that be true of any one without producing boldness in the day of judgment? There is no question of guilt, no punitive judgment at the judgment-seat of Christ for believers. Christ bore the judgment.

It is past. Believers died with the One who died, and now they are alive in the One who is alive. He is our life. He lives in us, and we are left here to live Him. He is going to overhaul us before we go into the Father's home. We shall have it all out; we could not go in without; but the very One who sits on the judgment-seat is our Bridegroom, our divine righteousness, our peace—*every thing* to our hearts. So there is no fear. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again."

What three magnificent blessings the love of God has put those in possession of who are saved!

Salvation from death and guilt, and salvation to God. Communion with God Himself!

Boldness in the day of judgment; because "as He is, so are we in this world."

H. M. H.

SAVED AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

SOME time ago, in a small town in Dorsetshire, a young man of about twenty-one years of age lay on his bed in an illness which he was told would soon terminate in death.

He had been a worldly and ungodly man, and now, being about to die, felt his unfitness to meet God as an unpardoned and unsaved sinner.

An aged Christian, who had known him for many years, called to see him; and on asking how he felt that morning, was answered by the anxious one in words somewhat as follows:

"Oh, Robert, I want salvation! I want to be saved! Tell me plain, so that I may understand how I can be."

When man has to face death and eternity, how he quakes and trembles if unsaved! Like another I knew lately, who had been living for many years in the service of sin and Satan, when a brother in the Lord said to him, as he was on his death-bed, "I must be plain, and say that it is now either heaven or hell for you; and that very soon you will be in one or the other."

Oh, how the poor fellow quaked with fear! And so it is with all those unsaved when eternity stares them in the face. All their boasted strength and wisdom fails then, and they are afraid to meet a holy God. How unlike the Christian, to whom death would be gain—just "absent from the body, and . . present with the Lord!"

Well, this dear old saint put the way of salvation before the young man as plainly as he could, and very shortly had the joy of knowing that he was saved; and soon after (as one of his sisters told the writer), when they were all gathered round his bed weeping, he looked up, and said, so calmly, "Don't cry for me; I am saved, and going to be with Jesus; I am all right."

What a beautiful testimony to the mercy and grace of God in saving such an one even at the eleventh hour! And so this man passed away, very bright and happy, to be for ever with the One who had revealed Himself to him as his Saviour.

Such is the infinite love that saves whosoever comes to God by Christ Jesus, trusting alone in Him and His finished work. Oh, come then, my reader, just as you are, in all your sins and guilt, and you will find Christ willing to cleanse and satisfy you for all eternity! The word of God is, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

W. H. D.

CONFESSION UNTO SALVATION

IS *God's way* of giving relief to the *anxious* heart, and to such—to an anxious enquirer—I would say, in the language of Scripture, "'Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him'" (Hosea xiv. 2), "I am quite willing, O holy God, to *let* Thy Word be *true* of *me* (Rom. iii. 4); and, as led, taught, and guided by the Holy Ghost, I now make *confession* (in accordance with Rom. x. 10) to the *salvation* which Thou Thyself, by means of the death and resurrection of Thy Son, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. ii. 5), *hast laid down for my acceptance* at the very threshold of my heart."

Yes, O living God, I *do* take Thee at Thine own infallible word, which certifies me that Thy Son not only came into the world to seek as well as to save lost sinners, but that He died *for all* (2 Cor. v. 15), gave Himself *a ransom for all* (1 Tim. ii. 6), and for that very reason *He must have died for me.*

"Whereas I was blind, now I see" (John ix. 25) that all my sins *have been accounted for in the death, and atoned for by the blood, of the divine substitute slain in my stead.*

With *truth and equity* art Thou now saying from heaven (Heb. xii. 25) that my sins are forgiven *for* His name's sake (1 John ii. 12), and that Thou *hast given* to me *eternal life.* (1 John v. 11.)

In return for *such* unhoped-for blessings, mercies, and benefits, what can I do *less than* devote the best energies of my happy, happy spirit, soul and body, to Thy service, Thy praise,

and Thy glory, joying and rejoicing in Thy Christ alone as all *my hope* (1 Tim. i. 1; Col. i. 27) and *all my salvation* (Isa. xii. 2), until for ever *with Himself.* C. G. E.

FAITH.

FAITH is not a blind assent to something that cannot be understood; nor does it take a leap into uncertainty. Under a sense of danger, he who has faith flies to a place of safety; burdened by a sense of guilt, he looks to One who can pardon; having proved every thing within untrue, he rests on the truth of One who cannot lie; and then, thank God, all his wants are met, his desires gratified, his *vacuum* filled. He finds the forgiveness of sins, peace with God, and all that the word of God makes good to the believer.

Faith builds upon two bases. First, man is ruined by sin; and, second, God is as good as He is mighty. Man cannot save himself, but God is both able and willing to save him. It therefore turns from works, feelings, and efforts of every kind, and confidently reposes on what God has said.

Let me give a simple illustration.

A little boy had climbed up to the roof of a stack. His position was dangerous; if he fell, he must certainly suffer. In his difficulty he called out to a woman who happened to enter the yard. She placed herself beneath the stack, and asked him to *jump into her arms.*

Well, the little fellow saw his danger, heard the invitation, was assured that the woman was fully able to support him; but the distance was considerable, so he held on to the ropes on the top of the stack—he feared to *let go.*

She understood his dilemma, and kindly said, "Don't fear; just slide down; I'll catch you." Then, at last, the boy did *let go*, and fell into the strong, kind arms beneath. He was safe! And, while being lowered to the ground, he heard his friend say, "*Why could you not trust me?*"

Now, this woman had been in soul-difficulty, darkness, and misery for some weeks. "Is it not thus," she reasoned, "that I have been treating the Lord? Has He not been asking me to drop into His arms, whilst I, afraid to do so, have been holding on to the ropes of my own fears? But now I, too, will just *let go*, and take Him at His word. He says, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;' and I come to Him." The happy effect was *peace*—immediate and abiding peace—with God.

That illustrates what faith does.

Now, reader, follow her example. You will be miserable *for ever* unless you come unto Jesus.

J. W. S.

A LANTERN, BUT NO LIGHT.

IN my diary is written: "Thursday, November 25th, 1886. R—— R——, an old man, aged eighty, drowned in the canal during the dense fog this evening. He had a lantern with him, but no light."

I and my companion were coming across the canal on the Friday morning, and on enquiring who they were dragging for, the dear old Christian who kept the narrow bridge told us the sad story, ending with, "Aye, poor old man, he had a lantern, but no light; and if only he had come to me, I would have lit it for him gladly."

At once I remembered Matthew xxv. 3: "They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them." Dear reader, have you ever noticed that scripture—"Five of them were wise and five foolish"? It is a very solemn thought that one-half of those who went out to meet the bridegroom were mere professors of religion—lamps, but no oil. Externally they were just the same as their fellows, but the immediate return of the bridegroom revealed the fact that they had got lanterns, but no light; that they were professors, but not possessors.

How many precious souls say, "Well, I am as good as the best of them;" and so these five foolish virgins might have said, for all had "slumbered and slept" (*v.* 5); but the bridegroom's presence, as he approached, tested the heart, and brought to light the truth that they were not ready *to meet him*, and only "they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut."

It is such a fashionable thing to-day to profess Christianity, and most beautiful lamps are carried in the hands of very many, whom, I fear, have got no "oil in their vessels with their lamps." (*v.* 4.) Oh, my dear friend, test every thing by Christ! Are *you* ready to meet *Him?* Have you got Christ Himself as your own personal Saviour? In John viii. 12 He says, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Does the name of Jesus, and the bright hope of His coming again, kindle a happy, loving response in your heart? Oh, I beseech you, do not rest till from the very depth of your heart you can say, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." What a *poor, miserable comfort* to the one for ever shut out is the lantern of profession. P. O.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

THE JUBILEE TRUMPET.

Read LEVITICUS xxv. 8–13.

WHAT a wonderful year this 1887 is to all Her Majesty Queen Victoria's subjects! From the great capital, London, right away to the Antipodes all are more or less occupied with and interested in this, the "Jubilee year" of her reign.

There are one or two special events which have happened, or are about to happen, calculated to leave a lasting impression upon many minds, such as the building of an "Imperial Institute," the release of prisoners in India, &c.

It was this latter action on the part of Her Majesty that brought to our mind the Jubilee as set forth in the scripture quoted at the head of this paper, in which, if you just refer to it, you will be able to trace the year of Jubilee to its Author, and see the grand foundation upon which it is based; namely, *the day of atonement.* By careful reading you will see too the condition and position many were in at the time of its approach; namely, *captivity, banishment,* and *debt.* Therefore it is easy to imagine with what joy *they* would hail the "trumpet sound" of Jubilee—a sound that proclaimed liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound, as well as restoration to their possessions.

Oh, how eagerly they listened, and how their very hearts bounded within them at the sound! Look at the jailer throwing open the prison doors; listen to him knocking off the captives' chains. Behold those *once* prisoners marching out free, and breathing the fresh air of liberty as they make for their long-lost possessions. We seem to hear them shout, at the top of their voices, "SALVATION" *and* "FREE." Yonder comes another, so weak and weary with his wanderings and poverty, all tattered and torn—too weak to shout; but you can discern the traces of sorrow, as it were, giving place to those of joy, as he wends his steps towards home and family; yea, on every hand sorrow gives place to joy, misery to happiness.

Oh, *what a Jubilee* indeed! such as could only be devised and planned by the All-wise and ever-gracious Lord God.

But mark well, my reader, that this trumpet was to sound throughout all the land "*in the great day of atonement*," showing us that the liberty obtained and the blessing received was all purchased with the life blood of the slain Victim, and consequently was quite apart from any effort or doings whatever of the people.

We would ask you now to refer to the scripture before you, and see if there is not in it that which so exactly answers to *your own* present position and condition *morally before God*.

Are *you* not at this very moment a captive, an exile, and a debtor?

A CAPTIVE in the chains of sin, slavery, and Satan, and *bound* in the prison-house of this world, according to 2 Timothy ii. 26.

AN EXILE *from* God in the "*far* country," "far

off," "having *no hope*, and without God in the world."

A DEBTOR *to* God for every faculty you possess, for every breath you draw; for health, for strength, and, may be, wealth; for the food you eat, and the clothes you wear, and innumerable daily mercies, seen and unseen; but above all, a debtor on account of your sins. Yes, *your sins*—sins that hold and bind you as a captive, and detain you in exile *at a distance from God. What a wreck!*

But, (ten thousand times ten thousand thanks be to God!) the forty-ninth year of *your* captivity, banishment, and debt has passed, and the year of Jubilee is present; *i.e.*, the acceptable year of the Lord. "Behold, *now is* the accepted time; behold, *now is* the day of salvation." Yes, blessed be His holy name for ever, the Victim *has* been slain, the blood *has* been shed, and atonement made for *you* even by our Lord Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God." (See Heb. x. 12–14.) He has died for the deliverance of the *captive*, that the *exiled* might be *brought nigh* by His blood, and that the *debtor* (whether great or small) might be frankly forgiven (see Luke iv. 18–21; Rom. iv. 25; Eph. ii. 13; Luke vii. 42), and all this to the joy and delight of the heart of God. (Luke xv. 20.)

So we sound aloud the trumpet of Jubilee—release, freedom, and home—not only to Her Majesty's subjects, but to the all of God's creatures, from the richest to the poorest, from the greatest to the least, founded upon the blood of the Lamb *absolutely*, *exclusively*, and *entirely*. (1 John i. 7.)

It is the "GRACE of God that *bringeth* salvation to all," so that the rich cannot buy it, and the

poor need not. *Both* must meet alike upon the same platform of grace as *needy, helpless sinners,* when God will with joy dispense salvation to their souls' everlasting blessing.

Hear ye then the "joyful sound, the trumpet of Jubilee."

"Now is the *day of* salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

"How shall we escape, if we neglect *so great* salvation?" (Hebrews ii. 3.)

"The gospel of Christ . . . is the *power of God* unto salvation to *every one* that believeth; to the Jew first, and also the Greek." (Romans i. 16.) *Obey it now,* and in this Jubilee year of Queen Victoria you shall begin a Jubilee that will last for ETERNITY. One more blast from the trumpet, and now open your heart to receive the waiting Saviour, and your chains will drop off, your prison door will fly open, and you will go forth emancipated, patiently to wait with all the redeemed for the trumpet to sound the redemption of the body (1 Cor. xv. 52), when we shall go to be for ever with the Lord.

"*Blessed* is the people that *know* the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." (Psalm lxxxix. 15, 16.)

J. M.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

JOHN viii. 32, 36.

THE EARTHQUAKES.

NOT long ago, when travelling from the North to London, a fellow-passenger told me that he was in the recent earthquake at Nice. His hotel rocked to and fro about a yard, and he was thrown violently from his bed on to a wardrobe that fell flat on the floor, which very much knocked him about, and greatly excited him, as he had heart disease. He also said the attendance at the *table d'hôte* next day fell from two hundred and forty to nine persons, and that fifteen thousand strangers at once fled from the town.

He said he was also in the earthquake at Naples a few years ago, which was not so severe as the recent one.

I enquired, "How would it have been with your soul if the wardrobe had fallen upon you and caused your death, instead of your falling upon it?"

"Oh," said he, "I hope I should have been all right, for I have been a good moral man all my life, and am a guardian of the poor in the important town in which I live! And besides that, I am well known as a useful man."

I asked, "Did you ever read the account of that earthquake which took place at Philippi? The jailer was roused up out of his sleep, and got so terribly frightened that he nearly committed suicide, and cried out to Paul and Silas (whose backs he had so shamefully beaten before he went to bed), 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' and he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he and all his house were saved." (Acts xvi.25–31.) "Yes," said he; "but that was a very long time ago, was

it not?" "Quite true," I replied; "yet mark two things connected with the man in that earthquake. *It* had the effect God desired, and it appears *one* earthquake sufficed to awaken *him* to a sense of *his* need of being saved, spite of his conduct to those faithful servants of God. But, pardon me, sir, it seems pretty clear you will require more than *two* earthquakes to arouse *you* to the same state, and receive a similar blessing to *your* soul."

My friend, looking very serious, said, "I am on my way, sir, to consult Sir William Jenner about the injuries I received to my heart." "Yes," I said, "no doubt that is all right, for I do not know a more eminent physician than Sir William; but I believe *God* is pursuing you. He is evidently on your track; for He wants you to come to the Great Physician of poor, lost, and ruined sinners to get your soul saved. That loving Physician said, 'They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance.' (Luke v. 31, 32.)

"Think of how ready He is to heal your immortal soul. This He can afford to do on the ground of His death and blood-shedding."

Our arrival at St. Pancras Station somewhat abruptly terminated our conversation, the result of which is left for God's great reckoning-day to disclose.

Reader, I would not ask what kind of a person *you* are, nor what you do, or are thought of in the place where you reside; *that* may be well enough for time, but no matter how good and useful you are morally, it can avail you nothing for eternity.

But what I do ask is, "*Is your never-dying soul*

saved or not through believing on the One 'who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification'?" Now, altogether apart from the cause and effect of earthquakes, let me draw your special attention to two or three of a number of the most profoundly striking incidents earth or heaven ever knew, or ever will know, which God has chosen to link earthquakes with, in addition to the one at the conversion of the Philippian jailer already alluded to.

The *first* was when Christ on the cross gave Himself a sacrifice to meet a holy God's claims, and ruined man's need—"Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent. . . . Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." (Matt. xxvii. 50, 51, 54.)

The *second* was when He, the Lord of life and glory, was raised triumphant over death and the grave by the glory of the Father. "As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake. . . . He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." (Matthew xxviii. 1, 2, 6.)

The *third* will take place when the wrath of God is being poured out upon this unrepentant, Christ-rejecting world—"Behold, I come as a thief. . . . And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice

out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." (Rev. xvi. 15, 17, 18.)

Now, dear reader, before referring to the *fourth*, I would say, Let no mistake arise. *Earthquakes* do not save souls; God has His own wise way of arresting people, and of opening their eyes to what He sees them to be. When Elijah stood upon the mount, it is written, "Behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was *not* in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD WAS NOT IN THE EARTHQUAKE: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was *not* in the fire: and after the fire A STILL SMALL VOICE. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle." (1 Kings xix. 11–13.)

Yes, it is "*the still small voice*" of His love, and not so much judgments, that most effectually reaches hard hearts. God's judgments may awaken, but you must listen for His *still small voice*, and to you, as it was to that jailer, and to many and many a one besides, that voice may be, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt* be *saved*." But do remember, it *must* be in this day of God's grace and long-suffering mercy which is so quickly passing away from you. Don't put it off till it is for ever too late; for, if you do, think of the awful time when you will beg and pray for an earthquake, and you will not be answered! "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and

the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and *said to the mountains and rocks,* FALL ON US, and hide *us* from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for *the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"* But meanwhile earthquakes are ahead, friend, whoever you are! Earthquakes await you if you continue a rejecter of the One who went under God's fiery judgments to deliver sinners from hell, and have them in the glory with Himself for ever, where earthquakes can never come!

Then awake out of your slumber, friend! "He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. xxix. 1.) "Because there is *wrath,* BEWARE lest He take *thee* away with *His stroke:* then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." (Job xxxvi. 18.) Yes, dear soul, I beseech thee, DO BEWARE, and DO NOT HARDEN THY NECK. For "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. x. 31.) J. N.

"I AM SAVED! I AM SAVED!"

THESE words were uttered by one who, in the prime of life, was brought low by rapid consumption. As the disease advanced he was aroused and led to call on the Lord for mercy, and found it.

A godly physician whom he visited, apprised him of his dangerous state, and added, "Oh, 'what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'" (Mark viii. 36.)

There had been previous anxiety, which now increased; at length he tried to pray, but could not; afterwards, when alone, he was heard exclaiming, "I won't go to hell. I will be saved." Ultimately an aged Christian came in and prayed with him, but not being intelligent as to the truth, the invalid was left somewhat occupied with himself, though really a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the writer entering his room, with extended arms he uttered the above words, adding, "But I can't see quite clearly; they tell me I must believe. I do believe, but I don't love Jesus enough." It was remarked, "You are looking at yourself—your own faith and love; it is the blood that puts away sin. 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'" Shortly after he took up a hymn-book, and read through the hymn—

"One there is above all others"

until he came to the line—

"We have found a friend in Jesus,
Oh, how *He* loves!"

Changing we to I, he repeated these lines again and again. At length the question of not loving Jesus enough being answered, he threw down the book, with such a look of delight, exclaiming—

"Oh, how *He* loves!"

Contrary to expectation he lived on for two months, rejoicing in the Lord, and testifying to all who visited him of the Saviour he so loved. When very near passing away, he desired those around to sing a favourite hymn—

"O Lord, Thy love's unbounded"

which in some measure used to arouse him, almost his last words being—

"Oh, how He loves!"

And now, dear reader, how is it with you? Have you found out that you are a poor, lost, guilty sinner? and, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, can *you* say feelingly, "Oh, how He loves!" The dear one you have read of had no good works to plead. His own words were, "What a change, that I, such a sinner, should be saved!" On another occasion, "I am more than happy; it will be so sweet to be in the glory. 'For ever with the Lord.' No more sin, no more sorrow."

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," is saying in His Word—"Come unto Me;" "Look unto Me;" "Take of the water of life freely;" "Now is the accepted time;" haste to Him, haste. S. D.

"THE HEAVY SINNER'S SAVED. TELL EVERYBODY."

TOM F—— was well known at L—— as a careless and ungodly man, living habitually in sin, and, as far as could be observed outwardly, with no fear of God before his eyes. It is some time now since he passed away from this world; but only quite recently a person who knew him remarked, "If ever there was a wicked man he was one."

But the eye of a gracious Saviour-God was following him, and at last His hand was laid upon him, and Tom fell grievously ill. A Christian in the town was told by some who went to visit him that they had found him in deep exercise about his soul. Knowing his character, he was greatly surprised; and calling round to see him, found him evidently awakened to a sense of his

lost condition in the sight of God. There was every mark of genuineness about him, as he often repeated, with the tears running down his face, "*I've been a heavy sinner, a very heavy sinner.*"

Whilst they were speaking together Tom told his visitor that when he was taken ill his lost condition rose up before him, and he found that he was "an undone man." The sins of his long misspent life so burdened his conscience that he could find no rest, and often during the nights he had cried earnestly to God to have mercy upon him. Ah, my reader, it is only those who have to do with God about their sins that learn in any measure what a grievous thing sin is in His sight. This heavy sinner was fully alive to what was at stake. Himself unable to read, nothing would satisfy him short of the plain statements of the word of God. With childlike simplicity he listened to the gospel message, and his soul was filled with joy and thankfulness as he heard the old story of God's wondrous love in the gift of His Son, and he rested upon that precious statement from His own blessed lips—"*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.*"

The glorious news that there was nothing for him to do, but that the whole work had been done by Another, was just suited to one who confessed the truth when he cried, "*I'm a heavy sinner, a very heavy sinner.*" With evident delight he drank in the blessed news of how God had been glorified at the cross in the death of His Son, and that the moment he believed on Him, his sins, black as they were, were all forgiven—"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." His conscience was at rest, his heart at peace, his soul at liberty. The word of

God, who cannot lie, assured him of the present possession of everlasting life. His simplicity was beautiful as his faith clung tenaciously to the imperishable word of the living God—"*He that believeth* . . HATH," &c.

One day, when Tom was very weak, the same visitor was telling him that all would be changed for him when he was with the Lord, and that pain, sorrow, and night would all be gone for ever. Looking up quite astonished, he enquired if that was God's word. On the scripture in the Revelation being quoted to him, he said, in his own emphatic way, "If that's God's word I'll back that."

Calling in on another occasion, he found two other Christian men with him, and Tom seeking to make one of them promise that he would teach him to read the Word, if ever he should get better. And as the latter was leaving he said, "The next time you preach at the corner, you tell them that Tom F——, the heavy sinner,'s saved. *Tell everybody.*" It appeared that from time to time, before Tom fell ill, that the words of the preachers at the street corner had often fallen upon his ears when going on in sin, and leading the folly in the public-house. And now Tom confessed that though outwardly he had seemed to be utterly indifferent, they had often touched his conscience, and his soul had been full of misery and dread with regard to the future. "There is a hymn," he added, "I repeat very often to myself, which I heard at the corner, and I would like you to sing it." For the moment he had forgotten the first line, when one suggested, "There is a fountain."

"That's it," he exclaimed; and raising himself

as well as he could, he endeavoured to join the others in singing it, whilst tears of joy streamed down his face.

Tom lived on many weeks, giving abundant proofs of a true work of the Spirit of God in his soul. Near his end here, the same friend, when shaking hands with him one day on leaving, said, "Shall I meet you again?" His eyes filled as he shook his head and replied, "I think not." But suddenly catching himself up, he added, "Oh, I see what you mean! *Yes, I will meet you again up there.*" Shortly after he fell peacefully asleep through Jesus, a trophy of the abounding grace of our blessed Saviour-God.

And now, beloved reader, how is it with you? You may not have gone to the same excess of riot that Tom F—— went to; but whatever your moral character may have been, you have a nature capable of going into the greatest wickedness. You may not, as he expressed his condition, be a *very heavy* sinner; but *a sinner* you are, and whatever the measure of the guilt you have incurred, your case is utterly hopeless *without Christ.* The word of God is plain: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.) To one class or the other you most surely belong. Either you are *a believer* or *an unbeliever.* Which is it? You may believe *about it,* but that is not the point. Dost thou believe on the Son of God? Each believer on Him *hath everlasting life,* and as a present known possession. Faith and life go together. To believe is to have. But, on the other hand, unbelief and wrath go together also. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life,

but the wrath of God abideth on him." Fearful portion! Think of it. "*Shall not see life.*" *Wrath abiding on him*—"*the wrath of God.*" "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." (Deut. xxxii. 29.)

Again we ask, before we close, Dear reader, how is it with you? Have you this life, *eternal life*, or have you not? If not, why not? God gives it freely to every one that believeth. Dost thou believe? To go on in unbelief is to shut yourself out from the life of God, and to remain under His abiding wrath for ever and for ever. Oh, take your place then, like poor Tom F——, as a self-judged sinner in His sight, and believe on His Son; for "he that believeth on the Son *hath everlasting life.*" E. H. C.

"MY STEP GETS LIGHTER."

THE subject of this paper, Charles W——, was brought up at a seaside town on the south coast of England. He was blessed with a wonderfully powerful frame and a healthy constitution. Life with him seemed worth living. He entered into all the pleasures and follies of the world heart and soul. He seemed to have no thought of God or eternity before him. But this course of life undermined his naturally strong constitution, and that dreaded foe, consumption, seized him in its deadly grasp.

He was by this time married, and the father of seven children. His brother, who was a Christian, visited him, and with much tenderness put before

him "the way of life, and the way of death." (Jer. xxi. 8.) He saw that Charles could not last long, and would soon have to face eternity. He visited him again some time later, when Charles said, "George, my step gets lighter every day."

His soul had no doubt drunk in the message spoken weeks before, and the seed had borne abundant harvest. Although physically he was very weak, and life outwardly was becoming a burden, he could say with a full heart, and a smile that belonged to heaven:

"George, my step gets lighter every day."

No doubt the future of his wife and seven darling children cost him many a heart-burn; but in spite of that, and his increasing bodily weakness, he could rejoice in the love of a Saviour who had washed all his sins away. He often spoke of the love which led His Saviour to take up such a worn-out wretch as he.

Perhaps my reader trembles when in *health* to look forward to eternity. Charles W—— *in weakness* looked forward to it with joy. I would beseech you to put *your* trust in Christ before it is too late.

"Procrastination," as the poet sang, "is the thief of time;" but it is also the devil's chief tool for landing souls into an eternity of misery, where no Christ or pardon is. Beware, my reader, of putting off! "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God *abideth* on him." (John iii. 36.)

A. J. P.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

JOHN III. 16.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

DO you know, dear friends, that the gospel came from the very heart of God Himself? It came to tell us what the love of His heart is, and the Announcer of this blessed news was One who knew well the heart He was revealing; for He was the "only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father." He was divinely competent to make the heart of God known. The devil tells us that we must love God into loving us. No indeed; He loves us into loving Him. He is the *first* in loving. The Proclaimer of the gospel is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. *He* is speaking in this verse—John iii. 16. The *audience* is the *world*, and the *subject* is the love of the heart of God.

Have *you* been touched by this wonderful story? Or are your hearts steeled against the love of God? If you do not know His love, it is not because He does not love you, but because your heart is fast closed by the shutters of unbelief. Open the shutters, and let in the love of God, so that for bondage there may be liberty, for misery a song, for wretchedness peace. The love of God alone can dispel the one or introduce the other.

See how this verse begins: "God so loved the world." People put "I," "me," "my" first. That is all wrong. God *must* be first in loving. Then whom does He love? The archangel? Fallen angels? Or do we read, "God so loved the elect"? No. "God so loved *the world*." We learn afterwards the Father's love to His family; but what the poor sinner needs first to learn is God's love to this guilty world.

"Where is the proof of God's love to the world?" you ask. Look at Calvary's cross. See there the Son of God dying for sinners. Every drop of blood that flows from the wounded Son of God proclaims the fact that "God is love." "It is finished," said the Lord Jesus Christ in that hour of darkness. "God is love" is the echo which reaches us from the glory on high.

God so loved. He gave the best He had in heaven for the worst on earth. He turned away His face from His Son on Calvary's cross, that He might ever turn to us His face of love; He forsook Him that we might never be forsaken. Can you fathom that word *so?* Do you want to know *how much* God loves you? Calvary and Golgotha are the answer. There you get the full manifestation of God's love; there alone can you gauge the depths of that word "so;" there alone can you scan the immeasurable lengths, breadths, depths, and heights of God's love to a guilty world. God is *light* as well as *love*. He is light, and hates sin, banishing it from His presence; He is love, and so loves the sinner that He gave His own Son to have him in His presence for ever.

"Still," you say, "I must surely try to win His love. Must I not love Him, in order that He may love me?"

Let me answer that question by a true anecdote.

A young girl had been sent by her parents to a boarding-school some miles from her home. The first night she spent amongst her new friends was a very sad one, not because she grieved to leave those who loved her, for she was separated from them only by a few easily-traversed miles, but because the thought would come to her heart again and again, "If the Lord should come to-night, I should be for ever as far removed from my parents as the peerless heights of glory are from the fathomless depths of the lake of fire."

She could not sleep, and the following night was passed in still greater agony of mind. At last her governess noticed her haggard expression, and after much questioning discovered the cause. Her advice to her young pupil was, that she should read her Bible morning and evening, say her prayers regularly, and do her duty as far as she was able.

"Then," said she, "you must hope to be all right at last."

The anxious girl followed the advice closely, but found no relief. Her nights were still sleepless; and as time passed on she became pale and ill.

One night, as she lay awake as usual, these words came distinctly to her mind: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"It says, 'God so loved the world.' She thought, "I am part of the world, so He must love *me*." She had been trying to love God into loving her; now she found that God had loved her first. In

the joy of her heart she cried, "God *loves* me! God loves *me!*"

Her schoolfellows awoke in alarm, wondering what had happened; and to them she told the good news, that she had just discovered that God loved her. The next day she wrote to her parents, that they might share her joy; and ever since she has known that God loves her, and that by believing on His only begotten Son she *has* everlasting life. In one moment she learned that, instead of having to win God's love, He had loved her all the time.

"Oh," you say, "I do not believe in such sudden conversions!"

My dear friends, all conversions are sudden. Are not all deaths sudden at the last? Physicians tell us that there is nothing between being dead and being alive; at one moment a person is alive, the next he is dead—there is no middle condition. So a person is either converted or unconverted, either saved or unsaved, either on the road to heaven or on the road to hell. When the clock strikes twelve to-night, it will do two things—it will strike out one day and strike in another. So faith strikes out the sinner and strikes in the saint; strikes out the unsaved and strikes in the saved. In which of these two conditions are you? In one or the other you must be.

Do you now see that you are an object of God's love? I press this, because the great effort of Satan to-day is to persuade people that they must do something to win God's love. It is all a delusion. God *must* be first in loving; it is *He* who loves you into loving Him.

"I have always thought," you may say, "that I must *give* something, at least, contribute towards the collection."

Nothing of the sort. You cannot *buy* God's gifts.

A remarkable answer was once given by a bishop to a wealthy gentleman of his diocese, who was entertaining him at his table. Desirous of impressing the bishop with an adequate idea of his religious zeal, this gentleman said:

"My lord, I give £2000 a year to charities. Every year I write a cheque for that amount, and hand it to my agent, to be distributed as he may think best."

"H'm!" said the bishop. "That is a heavy premium against fire."

True indeed. You cannot purchase freedom from judgment with £2000 a year. God *gives*, and He must be first in giving as He is first in loving. He *gave* His only begotten Son. He could not give more; for He had no greater gift to give. He would not give less; for less would not have been worthy of Him. Such a gift is worthy of the heart of God.

There were *two* hearts revealed at the cross—the heart of God and the heart of man. God's heart was saying, "I love the poor sinner, and give my only begotten Son for it." Man's heart was saying, "I hate God, and have put His Son on the cross."

God never says to the sinner, "Give me your prayers, tears, or good works." They would be useless. You might say prayers to reach from here to heaven, you might shed tears enough to float a fleet, you might do good works from now to the end of your life, but it would be of no avail. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." And there is no blood in your prayers, tears, or good works. Nothing but the blood of

Christ can purge your sins and make your peace with God.

"Nothing but the precious blood
Can make perfect peace with God."

Well, we have seen that God is first in loving and first in giving; we arrive now at the third point, where *we* come in: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever" (not loveth, not giveth, but) "*believeth* in *Him*." Your faith is to be in a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ; not in prayers or tears, not in baptism, confirmation, or sacramental commemoration, but in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

"But must not I experience good feelings," you say, "before I can be saved?"

Imagine a ship at sea. The wind gets up, the waves rise, a storm is coming.

"Furl the sails!" shouts the captain.

"It is done, sir," answer the men.

"Drop anchor!" shouts the captain.

"Done, sir," answer the men.

But still the ship rolls about, and is drifting on towards the rocks.

"Have you dropped anchor?" asks the captain.

"Yes, sir."

"Where have you dropped it?"

"In the hold," say the men.

What a foolish thing! They drop the anchor inside the ship instead of outside, and it is drifting on to certain destruction. Are *you* dropping anchor in the hold; looking into your own hearts to seek good feelings, on which to rest? Cast your anchor on *Christ*. He is the only safe anchorage for the soul. Whosoever believeth *in Him* shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

See now these four things:

GOD LOVED.
GOD GAVE.
I BELIEVE.
I HAVE.

The gospel of the love of God is contained in these eight words. He is first in loving, first in giving; you and I come in in believing. We, poor guilty sinners, accept God's gift in the empty hands of faith. What follows? "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What do those words "not perish" mean? What is it to perish? It does not mean annihilation. The word is the same as the word "destroy" in Hosea xiii. 9: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." That does not mean they were annihilated. The Lord when here said, "*Destroy* this temple, and in three days I will build it up." He spoke of the temple of His body. He did not mean it should be annihilated. No; to perish, or to be destroyed, means that the unrepentant sinner shall spend a dread eternity where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; away from God, never to be His child; away from Christ, never to be a member of His body; away from the Holy Ghost, never to be indwelt by Him; away from glory, holiness, joy, peace; away from all the happiness that the heart of God could give, or the blood of Christ could purchase.

Whosoever believeth shall *not perish*, but have everlasting life. Eternal life! That wonderful link with the Son of God in heaven. Do you know that you have it *now?* "He that believeth on the Son *hath everlasting life.*" (*v.* 36.) If you

have not, look at the second half of verse 36: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." The silken thread of life is all that is between you and a dark, dark eternity of woe.

Now there is proclaimed in this verse (John iii. 16): *Everlasting life*, the gift of *God's love* to a *guilty world* for *only believing* on the only begotten Son of God.

It may be interesting to many to notice that the words life, love, world, believe, and the Son (referring to the Lord as the Son of God), which are found grouped in this verse (John iii. 16), are mentioned frequently in the whole gospel.

The word *life* is mentioned thirty-six times; *love*, fifty-six; *world*, seventy-nine; the parts of the verb to *believe*, ninety-nine; *the Son* (of God), thirty-one. H. M. H.

SMASHED UPON THE ROCKS.

A BILLYBUOY, laden with coals—a cargo of some ninety tons—had left a coal port in the North, on her way south, and having to come by the east coast, a dangerous route, and especially in rough weather, she is supposed to have struck Whitby rocks and immediately sunk, the only thing left to trace her being the small boat which came to shore with a piece of the ship attached to the line, which was enough to show that the ship was a wreck and sunk.

The ship is gone, the coals are gone, and the three men and boy gone too. The ship and the coals at the bottom; the bodies of the crew too. GONE.

But, reader, they must rise again. I was talking with an old man of eighty-one who knew them, when he said, "I should not think any of them were Christians, and, poor fellows, no chance; for they would be dead in two or three minutes."

Does some one say, "Poor fellows, lost, and no chance to be saved?" So far as their bodies are concerned no chance at all; for it was a terrible night in March, wind blowing them on to the rocks, and a blinding snow-storm. At sea in a terrible storm, and without Christ — terrible indeed. The thought of the cry of these men rings in my ears.

Lost! lost! lost! No hope! Dying! and, according to report, without Christ! without hope! GONE! Where? Is heaven a reality? "Yes," says the reader; "Yes," says the writer. Is hell a reality? Do you, reader, say, "I am not sure?" The writer says "Hell is a reality." Christ says it. That's enough. Settled for ever. Christ says it. God says it. He cannot lie. Reader, are you ready for a sudden change, in two or three minutes say? Oh, do think this out! Look into the face of this question! Decide! decide! decide! What is the reply? Lost or saved? Hell or heaven, Which? (Matt. xvi. 26.) W. S.

"I DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM GOING, BUT IT IS ALL DARK."

A YOUNG and beautiful woman, surrounded by her husband and family, is passing that bourne whence no traveller e'er returns. Consumption has done its deadly work, and now the votary of pleasure is face to face with Death, the

king of terrors. Raising herself up as far as her feeble strength will admit, and clasping her husband's hand, she utters these words with despairing earnestness:

"Oh, William, I don't know where I am going, but it is all dark!"

Alas! there was none to speak of Jesus—He who alone can make a dying bed a scene of joy and triumph. Her husband is an avowed unbeliever, and he seeks in vain to allay her fears by assurances that "there is no hereafter," and that "death is simply ceasing to exist."

She passes away with the despairing cry, "It is *all* dark."

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked." You must spend eternity in heaven or in hell; either an eternity of untold joy and bliss, or an eternity of untold misery.

Let me ask you in all earnestness to ponder the two following pictures from the pages of Scripture:

Judas—"Went immediately out, and it was night." (John xiii. 30.) He went "to his own place." (Acts i. 25.)

Stephen—"Looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus." (Acts vii. 55.) He was "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (2 Cor. v. 8.)

Think for a moment of a man who had been in closest company with the Lord for three years, had seen all His wondrous works, and heard His gracious words, turning his back upon Him who was the "Light of the world"—going out from His presence, out into the night. See him

controlled by Satan, led captive by him at his will, going on to his doom, to his own place.

Perhaps you resent being likened to Judas. Believe it or not, you are, if unsaved, led captive by Satan at his will, and, like Judas, assuredly bound for your own place. Unfit for heaven, where then can you spend eternity? Unfit for God's presence, you will be banished for ever into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Look on the other picture. Alone, in the midst of an angry crowd thirsting for his blood, gnashing on him with their teeth, Stephen stands undismayed.

Full of the Holy Ghost, he looks up. Heaven opens, and in the centre of all the glory he sees a Man, the Man Christ Jesus, standing on the right hand of God. Lost to all else but that wondrous vision, he heeds not the cruel stones which his murderers hurl upon him.

He fears not "them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." (Luke xii. 4.)

What can they do? They can set his happy spirit free to wing its way to its own place—the place where Jesus is. (John xiv. 3.) He goes in—in to the light, in to the glory—to be with Jesus. Happy release!

Tell me, friend—Were God, in whose hand thy breath is, but to withdraw for one moment His sustaining power, and stop the beating of thy heart, how would it be with thee?

Still Jesus saith, "Come unto Me."

"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

T. S.

"WITH THE MOUTH CONFESSION IS MADE UNTO SALVATION."

ROMANS x. 10.

SOME time ago the writer was asked to visit a youth dying of consumption, and anxious about his soul. Glad of the opportunity of pointing the dying one to the "Lamb of God," he lost no time in calling upon him. On entering the cheerless apartment called "home," he found the young man in bed, and evidently near the end of his course, and as yet unprepared to meet God. The anxiety told out in every line of that pale, thin face moved the heart of the visitor to its very depths, and inwardly crying to God that he might be used in conveying a peace-giving message to the heart and conscience of the dying boy, he opened the Bible.

Seeing that the God of all grace and mercy had preceded him in producing a deep conviction of sin and soul yearning for peace, he read very slowly the tenth chapter of Romans up to the tenth verse, when the youth, who had been listening most eagerly, as if life or death hung upon the words, broke in with, "Stop a minute, sir; read that last verse again." Very quietly each word (fraught with life everlasting to the dying soul) was repeated—"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Drawing out his wasted, bony arms from underneath the coverlet, he lifted them above his head, and with clasped hands, and face looking earnestly

upward, he exclaimed, with voice thrilling with emotion, "Lord Jesus Christ!" And as the tears burst forth peace and joy flooded his heart, and he cried out at the top of his voice, "Oh, Lord Jesus, I have been seeking Thee ever so long, but could not find Thee until now! I thank Thee, oh, I thank Thee, I thank Thee!"

He had found Jesus in that blessed word, but the lost sheep was *found of the Shepherd.* The sinner-seeking Saviour had found the Saviour-seeking sinner, and there was joy in heaven that night over one lost, one found, and one that was dead brought to life again.

Dear reader, let us ask you affectionately, Have you found Jesus yet? or rather, "Have you been found of Him?"

Perhaps these lines may be read by some poor, wearied, distracted, sin-burdened soul. Oh, troubled one, turn and look to Jesus—

> "Let not conscience make you linger,
> Nor of fitness fondly dream;
> All the fitness He requireth
> Is to feel your need of Him."

Don't listen to the voice of reasonings in your heart, as in verse 6, but let His voice reach your soul from the resurrection side of the grave.

"Peace be unto you. . . . Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself." (Luke xxiv. 36, 38, 39.) And then bow at His blessed feet like the dear dying boy, and say, as Thomas did, "My Lord and my God."

P. O.

THE INSURANCE-AGENT.

ONE evening I was busy asking the passers-by to come into a hall where a servant of God was telling

"Of a Saviour's love and a home above,
And a peace that all might know."

Among the number I invited was a young man, who said that he had no time to come in, as he was very busy canvassing for an insurance society.

The immense difference between his business and mine struck me at once. I said to him:

"You are very busy insuring people in case of *death;* we are, by the grace of God, insuring sinners for *life*, for all eternity."

This busy young man is only a sample of a very large majority in the world, perhaps my reader amongst the number. Men are very busy thinking of *this* life, and planning how best to secure their own interests. A man insures in an accident insurance society, in case he should be injured; he insures his house and furniture in a fire insurance society, and himself in a life insurance society.

I know a man who was insured in a burial society by his parents before he was seven days old. How very eager men are about their own interests and comforts in this poor sin-stained world, and yet how awfully careless they are in view of eternity! Reader, have *you* ever looked *your* ETERNITY in the face?

The desert of Sahara is 3000 miles long by 1000 miles broad. No sane man would ever think of setting himself the task of counting the grains of sand which make up that immense desert. Yet if each grain counted as a million

years, and you lived through that incomprehensible stretch of time a million times over, you would only have begun eternity; you would be *no* nearer the end than when you began. If my reader is saved, what an unspeakable happiness to look forward to—an eternity of joy in heaven! But if unsaved, how terrible to spend eternity with the devil and his angels, where there is that awful twofold occupation, weeping and gnashing of teeth. Oh, reader, pause and trust in what the Son of God says: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but *is* passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.) A. J. P.

"OH, WILLIAM, IS THIS DEATH?" OR, "CHRIST IS MINE."

SOME years ago an excellent wife and kind mother, apparently in good health, and busily engaged in preparing breakfast for her husband and family, was seized with sudden pain of so severe a nature that she fell back into her husband's arms in a dying state.

She was perfectly sensible of her position, and said to him, "Oh, William, is this death?" adding, after a pause, "Well, Christ is mine; I am a great sinner, but He is a greater Saviour."

After a few hours of agony she passed away, departing "to be with Christ, which is far better." (Phil. i. 23.)

Were you, my dear reader, to be taken unawares, called away at almost a moment's notice, would you, like this woman, be found with the blessed

soul-sustaining truth of a present salvation, and able to say, calmly and quietly, looking death in the face, "Well, Christ is mine"?

If so, you can readily bid farewell to this world's fleeting joys, and welcome an eternity of joy and unfading happiness with the one who loved you—

> ". . . E'en to death . . .
> A death of shame and loss,
> To vanquish for you every foe,
> And break the strong man's force."

"Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death . . . that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. ii. 9), took and tasted that which was our portion on account of our sins—death in all its terrible reality. "And *as* it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: *so* Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." (Heb. ix. 27, 28.)

This is a firm foundation for you to set your feet upon, so that, whether it be departing "to be with Christ, which is far better" (Phil. i. 23), or His coming to take us to be with Himself (John xiv. 3), you can say, "Christ is mine; if I am a great sinner, He is a greater Saviour."

Do not delay then, but *now*, whilst God is commending His own "love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8), let the language of your heart be—

> "Jesus, I will trust Thee,
> Trust Thee with my soul;
> Guilty, lost, and helpless,
> Thou canst make me whole.
>
> "There is none in heaven
> Or on earth, like Thee;
> Thou hast died for sinners,
> Therefore, Lord, for me."

W. N.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

JACOB'S PRESENT OR GOD'S GIFT; WHICH?

"I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me."—GEN. xxxii. 20.

WHEN reading this soliloquy of Jacob, as he anticipated his meeting with Esau, whom twenty long years before he had so grievously offended, I was struck by the coincidence of thought in his mind, and in the mind of the newly-awakened soul on coming to God.

Notice, first, that Jacob was deeply conscious of having incurred his brother's displeasure, and he accordingly felt the necessity of what he called appeasing him.

So with the sinner to whom the sense of guilt has been brought home. He feels that he too has incurred the wrath of God on account of his sins, and that compensation is necessary. Something must be done in order that the stroke be averted. Secondly, Jacob reckoned on the good effect that would be produced by the *present* that went before him. This present, he hoped, would work wonders. He did not spare expense. The present was enormous—hundreds of goats and sheep, scores of camels and kine, all delivered into the hands of his servants—drove first, second, third, and more to follow, with a charge, couched in lowly language, to each servant that "they be

thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau."

All that wealth could furnish, all that humble words could express, were pressed into service. By all this was the outraged brother to be appeased; and if this failed, what could possibly succeed? If after the sight of this costly oblation, and the sound of these reverential words, Esau remained untouched, then nothing could purchase his favour or melt his heart.

Jacob was a shrewd man. He knew human nature, and he had long before this measured his brother, and got to know his foibles; he, therefore, acted on this knowledge.

Again, we have a striking analogy in the ways of the returning sinner. He, too, prepares a present to go before him. He feels that something is needed; perhaps that much, even very much, is needed. Shall he not try to give the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul? "If God is to be appeased in no other way than by the present that I bring, then assuredly the more I bring the more likely am I to succeed. What present shall I send before me?"

"I'll devote all my days to His service," says the young man. "I'll reform my conduct, and by future amendment I'll atone for the past," says the old one.

The present is to consist of hundreds of good works and scores of sacraments, together with such lowly words as the lips can best frame. If all this should fail to appease, then what can? Jacob knew his brother, and calculated aright; but—and in this important particular our comparison fails—the sinner does not know God. The knowledge of human nature is anything but

a guarantee for a knowledge of the divine. This is a knowledge that cannot be acquired in school, college, or university; by science or by religion. It must be imparted.

No, my reader, if you have not been born again you do not know God, and your present, however magnificent in your own eyes, is utterly valueless. "I have done my duty," said a dying young curate to his godly bishop.

"Done your duty!" replied his lordship. "Forsooth," said he, "'if thou knewest the gift of God.'" He was ignorant, up to that well-nigh fatal moment, of God and His gift, and bethought him of "duty" as the present to go before him. How common!

Thirdly, "And afterward I will see his face." Yes, but not before. This matter of appeasement must precede. It is impossible that Esau should come forth and bid his offending brother welcome without a solid satisfaction being first given to him. How could his face be seen without a substantial and eloquent apology? How could Esau show grace? so thought Jacob, and thought rightly.

So, too, thinks the sinner, but wrongly. "I am too poor to bring a present," might the prodigal have reasoned; "but at least, after disburthening my soul of a full confession, I will offer my services; I will seek to buy my father's favour by performing the menial toil of a hired servant. Yes, I cannot send a present before me, but I will bring up one behind me. On this ground I hope to see his face." Excellent human reasoning, and so intelligible! But hark! "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." All voluntary, and no conditions as to a

present, or as to subsequent toil. Ah! the genuine, lowly, lovely confession of his broken heart was dearer to the father than thousands of rams or ten thousands of rivers of oil could ever have been. God can show grace.

Fourthly, "Peradventure he will accept of me." What, only a "*perhaps*" after all! Can Jacob's present purchase nothing more for him than a possibility? No assurance, no confidence in his brother's favour? What an unhappy state of things! To think that poor Jacob could obtain no certainty of acceptance after all his self-denial, and scheming, and foresight, and that still he had no security of his life. How miserable! But again, how common!

Oh, the multitudes who, like returning Jacob, are not further than hoping for acceptance! "Peradventure He will accept of me," is their strongest language; but how dark! how unhappy! how unlike God to leave us in uncertainty!

Well, these words of Jacob give the idea that many entertain of God's way of salvation. It springs from the hope of appeasing by a present, and ends in doubt. It is no gospel.

The gospel, whilst saying that the throne of God requires propitiation on account of sin, tells us that the heart of God has provided, in the death of His Son, for all that His justice claimed. "God is light," and therefore sin must be exposed and punished; but "God is love," and thus He gave His only begotten Son.

How could my good work meet the demands of infinite holiness, or the present that goes before me appease God's wrath? Impossible. "But now God's righteousness is manifested." Christ is the propitiation. The claims of the throne are met

in the blood of Jesus; so that now God is "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." The appeasement has been made, and now God, as it were, beseeches you to be reconciled. This is just the opposite of the thought in Jacob's mind.

The natural thought is that I must appease God; the truth is that propitiation has been made, and that God proclaims reconciliation.

The natural hope is in the virtue of the good works that you send before you; the truth is that the work of atonement is complete.

The natural thought is that God cannot show His face, or express His welcome, until you have bought Him over to you; the truth is that God loves you as you are.

The natural thought is that *perhaps* you may be accepted; the truth is that the believer *is accepted in the Beloved*, and he therefore gives thanks to the Father who hath made him meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

What a difference! How happy to know God! But, reader, do *you* know Him?

J. W. S.

HOW HAVE YOU TREATED THE GOSPEL OF GOD?

READER, you are either
An accepter
A neglecter, or
A rejecter

of the great salvation which God has provided in Christ for you.

We are told in 2 Corinthians vi. 2 that "Now is the accepted time," or "time of acceptation."

If you have believed this, and have acted

accordingly, confiding (or "believing") in Christ, I can tell you of six precious truths about yourself.

God declares in His word that you, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,

(1) Have (now, in this world) everlasting life. (John iii. 36.)

(2) Are passed from death unto life. (John v. 24.)

(3) Will never come into judgment. (John v. 24, R.V.)

(4) Are justified from all things. (Acts xiii. 39.)

(5) Have peace with God. (Rom. v. 1.) This peace is *enjoyed* in the *knowledge* of justification.

(6) You are a heavenly citizen. (Phil. iii. 20.)

These six things are absolutely your property, in common with every true believer on the Lord Jesus Christ. Your *possession* of them depends in no wise on your *knowledge* of them, though your *enjoyment* does. Possession and enjoyment must be carefully distinguished.

If you are a *neglecter* of God's grace, you are in exactly the same position as the open rejecters. A sick man, if he refuses to take his medicine, is not more foolish than if he said he would take it and yet neglects to do so.

I should like to remind you, neglecter, of two solemn sayings of God—

"How shall we escape if we NEGLECT so great salvation?" (Hebrews ii. 3.)

"The fearful, and UNBELIEVING . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." (Rev. xxi. 8.)

You may not *intend* to go to hell; no one ever does. But remember, *God says*, "To-day" (Heb. iii. 7) and "Now." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) Satan says, "To-morrow," "Another time."

Whom will you heed?

"*To-day* if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." (Heb. iii. 7, 8.)

Rejecter, I have a word for you too—

"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and PERISH." (Acts xiii. 41.) "Beware lest that come upon YOU." (Acts xiii. 40.)

Yes, rejecter, nothing remains for you, if you persist in your course of rejection, but to PERISH. There is such a thing as God in His government letting a soul hear His gospel for the last time.

God has spoken to you neither once nor twice, but many times in grace. Beware lest you go so far in your rejection of Christ that God never allows you to hear His voice in *grace* again! You will most surely hear it in *judgment* if you heed it not in this day of grace.

Reader, if you are an accepter of God's glad tidings—a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ—you are a child of God.

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons [children] of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John i. 12.)

How simple is this!

Again, "Ye are all the children of God, *by faith in Christ Jesus*." (Gal. iii. 26.)

What else?

"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." (Eph. iv. 1.)

Neglecters and rejecters, you are guilty of the awful sin of not accepting God's salvation; and how, oh! how will you escape? (Heb. ii. 3.)

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think,
Ere you further go,
Will you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?"

E. V. G.

SAVED BY GRACE, AND NOT OF WORKS.

LATE in the year 1886, while going through some country villages with Scripture almanacs and books, near the village of W——, I observed two houses. Knocking at the door of the first a man came out to me, and by the happy expression of his face I could almost tell before asking him that he was a subject of the saving grace of God. I offered what I had, and just stated what it was about, when a quick response was made by him, and it was as I supposed; viz., that he was eternally saved by the wondrous grace of God through resting on the finished work of Christ. To use his own words, "Christ has done it all; He has finished the work. God is satisfied. Christ has died in my stead." It was indeed cheering to meet with such a one who was resting on the immovable word of the living God. After a few more words we parted. Passing on to the next house another man stood before me. Offering him what I had, and pointing out what was on it, he looked at it, saying, "I do not believe in this religion; I believe God wants us to do our part. Christ has done His part; we must do ours; for the apostle says, 'We must work for salvation.'" I pointed out to him the scripture he referred to, which he misquoted, in Phil. ii. 12—"Work out *your own* salvation with fear and trembling." By this, then, we see, from the words "your own," that salvation is possessed, then, after it is possessed, the words are "work out," and not before. All works before conversion God calls "dead works." (Heb. ix. 14.) Then, referring

to other scriptures that treat of the same subject and of eternal life, I said, on the authority of the word of God, I could say I had this eternal life, which was for all who believe on the Son of God. (1 John v. 13.) Saying it was blasphemy, he closed the door.

What a contrast indeed between these two men! One believing what God has said in His word, the other making God a liar. And now I would like to put a question to any who may read these lines. If death should overtake these two men in the state in which I saw them, how would it fare with them? Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am He ye shall die in your sins." It puts one in mind of a river, across which is a strong bridge, and a weak plank that would break in the middle. If I attempt to go across on the latter, I must surely fall into the river; but if on the former it will carry me across safely. It is Christ alone that must save my soul, or I shall eternally perish. And it is the same with you, dear reader. God is no respecter of persons; there is no other way. By nature we are utterly unable to do good works in God's sight; for it is written, "There is none that doeth good; no, not one." (Rom. iii. 12.) Also in verse 10—"There is none righteous; no, not one." But, on the contrary, it says, in Romans iv. 5, "To him that worketh not." How solemn then to reject God's way of salvation; for Christ must do all or none; and yet how many are rejecting Christ. Now just put the question to yourself, "Am I thinking that I can do a part as to my soul's salvation, and Christ do the other?" Oh, I beseech you, banish all such thoughts from your mind, and

take God's thoughts concerning His Son! Rest on His finished work; trust not to self any longer, but trust in Christ alone. God is satisfied with that mighty sacrifice. Christ offered Himself without spot to God. God is satisfied, are you? H. B.

AN EARNEST APPEAL.

"I HEARD yesterday of the death of Mr. J. ——, and remembering the name, I asked your sister if it were your master, and found it to be the same; and I can but send a word to you on this most solemn occasion, and pray God to use it to your soul's blessing. In the prime of manhood God has, in His own sovereign way of acting, taken your master's life from the earth, and he now has entered upon a changeless eternity, where he will reap the fruit of all his ways in this world. 'I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.' (Jeremiah xvii. 10.) Now no prayers or tears can reach him, a thousand thunders could not awake him from his sleep. If he has died without Christ, if he had not obtained eternal life by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, he is, and for ever will be, where there is never a ray of light, never a ray of hope, never a drop of precious blood to cleanse, never a drop of water to slake his quenchless thirst, the lake of fire his eternal portion, the righteous wrath of a holy sin-hating God, rolls over his guilty soul to the ages of ages—eternity! eternity! eternity!

"Have you considered its duration? If you

could count every drop in the ocean, and take a million years to count each drop; if you could count every leaf of every tree, and take twenty million years to count each leaf; if you could count each grain of sand upon the seashore; if you could count every star that bespangles the heaven, and every blade of grass, eternity would be but as begun. The time you would occupy would be but as one swing of the pendulum, as one beat of your pulse. Are you going to brave this eternity? Are you saying in your heart, 'Another day will do to settle the question where I am to spend the untold, unfathomable, and measureless ages'? Are you saying, 'To-morrow shall be as to-day'? 'When I have a convenient season I will settle it'? Be warned, I entreat you, not to sport on the brink of eternity. You are like a man crossing a bottomless gulf upon a bridge of sand. You are like to one lying down to sleep upon the top of a mast. Awake! awake! awake! I beseech you *now*, to this momentous fact, that your soul will live for ever, and *to-day* your soul may be required of you. If you die in your sins—unforgiven, unjustified, unsaved, uncleansed—no power in heaven or earth can take you from the pit of woe. 'Flee from the wrath to come.' Hasten to the shelter provided by God, whose name is love; for 'the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven . . . and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day cometh that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts.' (Malachi iv. 1.)

"'He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.' (John iii. 36.)

"Do you know why you are not this moment

in hell? It is because God is the God of mercy.

"'He willeth not the death of a sinner'—'Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' (2 Peter iii. 9.)

"Would you like to know there is no judgment for you? Then look to Jesus, hear His word—'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' (Matthew xi. 28.)

"Would you like to know *all* your sins are for ever gone? Then listen to the word of the living God—'Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him *all* that believe *are* justified from *all* things.' (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

"Would you like to know God loves a sinner like you? Read John iii. 16: 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' *Have it now.* 'The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.' He is in mercy seeking you by these blessed wooing words of love.

"Will you turn your back upon Him again when He says, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me'?" (Rev. iii. 20.) M. C.

A LESSON FROM THE SWALLOW.

WE were spending a few days one summer on Dartmoor, the picturesque moorland of Devonshire, and passing through a hamlet in one of the central parts we came to a cottage inhabited by a lone old woman. Seen from with-

out, on a beautiful summer day, it was rather a pretty cottage, but the little we saw of the inside was anything but inviting; nor indeed was the appearance of its occupant, who was standing in the doorway as we passed, very much bent by age and infirmity, leaning on a stout stick. "Old Betsy" accosted us as we drew near with some remark about the weather; so thinking we might get an opportunity of speaking to her about her soul, we asked her if she lived alone. We must not attempt to reproduce the old woman's Devonshire brogue; but she at once replied, "Yes, but my son comes night and morning to milk the cow."

"And are you not lonely," we asked, "without anyone to speak to for so many hours?"

"No, I am not lonely; I've got plenty of company."

"Who is your company then, Betsy?" we said, hoping to hear the poor old soul knew the Lord Jesus as her Saviour and Friend.

"Why, good thoughts, to be sure," said she, looking up from her stooping posture.

"And what are your good thoughts about?" we ventured to inquire. But the old woman did not care to be pressed quite so closely; and with an evident desire to change the subject, she called our attention to the swallows, or rather martins, that had built their nests in a row on each side of the doorway under the eaves of the roof of her humble cottage.

"They haven't been back long," she said; and pointing upwards with her stick, she added, "By-and-by they'll fly up there all together and chatter like a lot of Christians, and then fly off to some other place."

This at once brought to my mind that beautiful verse in the prophecy of Jeremiah (viii. 7): "Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord."

Again turning to "Old Betsy," I asked her if she had ever read this scripture about the swallow, and tried to impress on her the lesson taught by the little birds that cheered her by their annual visit. A day or two after one of our company got another opportunity of having a little chat with the old woman in her cottage over the Scriptures, and learned the result of the visit in rather a remarkable way. A Christian friend was passing by the cottage afterwards, and heard the old woman telling a neighbour that someone had been to her, telling her she was lost and would go to hell. "If they come here again," said the poor old soul in her quaint brogue, "*I'll offend them.*" Such was the effect, so far, of seeking to arouse the conscience of poor "Old Betsy," who was well known, to those who cared for souls in that place, as not only spiritually dark, but quite likely to refuse or offend any who sought to approach her on the subject of her soul's need.

I was thankful, under the circumstances, we had been so kindly received. But, alas! how many are the nominal Christians who have never learned a lesson from the turtle, the crane, and the swallow! who know not the appointed time, or the judgment of the Lord! My reader, let me ask if *you* know the appointed times. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Have you considered this, so as to

take advantage of the present day of grace, when the voice of God is heard on all sides in the blessed gospel, inviting sinners to take refuge in Christ, ere the storm of His wrath burst upon an ungodly world? Another divine appointment is spoken of in Acts xvii. 30, where we read, "God . . . now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained." Surely it behoves both you and me to know these appointed times, and to be prepared for them, just as the stork prepares, and the swallow and other birds fly away at the right time to warmer climes. Think of poor old Betsy and her remark about the birds. They were far beyond her in their intelligence of the times; they prepared to avoid the winter's deadly blast, but she was not prepared for death and judgment. Are you, dear reader? Do not be befooled, and think it is all right. This is a time of richest blessing. The glad tidings of God concerning His Son have been sent out to all, carrying salvation to the one who believes, whoever and wherever he may be; but judgment is the next thing.

There is yet another lesson from the swallow given us in the Scriptures. In Psalm lxxxiv. 3 it reads: "Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young; even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God." Now, what does this mean? There must be some reason why God should speak of these two birds, and perhaps it is because the swallow is never at rest and the sparrow is never satisfied; such a picture of what my heart and your heart are, dear reader,

without Christ—never satisfied, and never at rest. But the beautiful figurative language of the psalm says that these two typical birds find a house and nest in the altar of God; strange place indeed for either.

Just think of what the altar is, and what was done upon it. It speaks of judgment; it speaks of a victim offered to God as a sacrifice for sin; and it points to Christ, the Lamb of God, who "once in the end of the world hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. . . . . Once offered to bear the sins of many." This is how the poor, restless, dissatisfied sinner can find a home and rest in the altar of God. We learn that judgment has been passed there on another in our stead, the just judgment of God against sin, and we take refuge there. Flee then, my reader, to that One "whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood," and learn from the crane and the swallow to do it at the right time—*Now*. T. R.

MAN'S LITTLE GREATNESS.—We think a great deal of this man and that, and perhaps they are great; but considering the size of the world, what does the world know of them? Half the world no doubt has never heard of them. Some persons think a great deal of this man or that, others do not. Some perhaps think them fools. After all it is little greatness, and no one should care to rob them of it. The thing itself is of little value. Yet man may be commendable in many ways. He may be scientific, learned, do great achievements in the world, but he has to die. What is the use of making much of people who have to die?

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

SALVATION, SAFETY, AND SEPARATION.

1 Samuel xxii. 1, 2, 20, 23.

DAVID is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is so presented in Scripture by the Holy Ghost (not in his failures, of course); all types fail, the antitype *never*. It is blessed not to be occupied with the failure of the type, but with the faithfulness of the antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ.

David is the central figure in this chapter, and three things are connected with him—first, salvation by David, or in the antitype *salvation* by Christ, *safety* with Christ, and *separation* to Christ. You will see five *d*'s in this chapter. The central *d* is David, and the other four are grouped around him. There are three in verse 2, those in *distress*, those in *debt*, those *discontented;* and the fourth in verse 20, Abiathar, a man *doomed* to death. No unsaved person can escape one of these *d*'s. If you try, and escape *one*, the others stare you in the face. First look at those in *distress*. Are *you* in distress? I do not mean bodily distress or distress of circumstances, but about your sins. Do you know what real *soul* distress is? It is the work of the Holy Ghost. Have you ever awaked to the fact that you have been living in habitual rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ? That awakening is the first work of the Holy Ghost, for He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; of *sin* in its rejection of Christ; of God's *righteousness* in

accepting Christ; (for, though rejected by the world, He is accepted in heaven, He is the song of heaven; the mind of heaven is one in accepting Him whom the world rejected); of *judgment* because the prince of this world is judged. (John xvi.)

Has the Holy Ghost brought home to your heart the sin of rejecting the Christ of God, of resisting the Spirit of God? Are you despising Christ, or delighting in Him in whom God has found all His delight? Are you in distress? If so, come to Jesus, just as the distressed went to David. He will give you rest from your soul distress. There is no relief in looking in upon a heart deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; there is no relief in looking around, but a voice from heaven says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." Saved from what? Your soul distress. When? On the spot. For how long? For *eternity*.

Next came those in *debt*. You may not be in debt to your neighbour, but you are in debt to God; you are in debt to Him for the air you breathe, for your senses, for the sun that shines upon you, for another opportunity of receiving this gospel message, for one more opportunity of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of your souls. Have you ever found out that you are in debt to God, and cannot answer to Him? God has a *right* over you; you have lived as though you were an irresponsible being, but you are responsible to God. Can you meet your liabilities? You *know* you cannot. What is to be done? Christ has taken the wages due to you; for "the wages of sin is death." The sword of justice was against you and me, but it fell on Him. He took the wages of sin, met the demands of righteousness, vindicated

the word, the character, the outraged attributes of God, and said, "It is finished." Now He can let you know that He has met your liabilities, all the claims that were against you, and suffered for you, the poor debtor. When He was here He spoke of a debtor who owed five hundred pence, and another who owed fifty, and the creditor "frankly forgave them both." On what ground can God frankly forgive His debtors? On the ground that Christ has paid all that was due from you and me on Calvary's cross. Whether you owe five hundred pence or fifty, He will frankly forgive you *all*.

Thirdly, the discontented gathered themselves to David. They did not go to Saul, but in David they found certain and permanent relief. Are you discontented? Are you trying to get salvation by good works, by tears, prayers, reading the Bible? Can you say truly, "Holy God, wilt Thou accept all these good deeds of mine in payment of the debt I owe Thee, to make my peace with Thee, to put away my sins, to satisfy Thy righteous claims, and to make me fit for heaven?" You *know* you cannot. Then you must be discontented. You had better give them all up.

"Cast your deadly doings down,
Down at Jesus' feet,"

and listen to His words, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." How can I come to Him? you say. Believing on Him is coming to Him. Look to Him. How can I look to Him? Believing on Him is looking to Him. Touch Him. How can I touch Him? Believing on Him is touching Him. Receive Him. How can I receive Him? Believing on Him is receiving Him. He will relieve you of your discontent for eternity.

Now we come to the doomed man. What was before Abiathar? The sword of judgment. He solemnly illustrates all who are *un*saved. You have death and judgment before you; for it says, in Hebrews ix., "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Oh, you say, "I don't believe there is anything after death." Don't you? You will believe it the moment after you have died. Man, with continuity of existence, does he die like a horse or dog? Man has spirit, soul, and body. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. If you die in your sins, as a rejecter of Christ you will be raised in your sins, you will stand before the great white throne in your sins, you will leave that throne in your sins for the lake of fire, which is the *second death*. Is there no escape from this? Yes, Christ bore the judgment. He emptied the cup of wrath, and is the door of escape from death and judgment. He is now beyond death, in life and glory. Come, then, to Him with all your distress. He will give you rest. Come with your debts, and He will forgive you. Come with your discontent, and He will fill you with delight. Come, though death-doomed, and He will let you know that He has been into death and judgment, so that you can say—

"Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory are before;
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,
There they spent their utmost power."

He can save you from distress, from debt, from discontent, and from doom. Is not such a salvation worthy of Him? Come, then, to His feet. Trust His heart, and find rest, a home, and salvation there. There is no salvation anywhere

else; for we read, in Acts iv., "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

The second point in our chapter is *safety*. You say, "I may get salvation to-day, but what about to-morrow?" You can no more keep yourself than save yourself; but we find that David not only saved those who came to him, but he became their preserver, their shield—the foe would have to reach them over his body, as it were. Christ not only saves us, but preserves us. Our life is hid with Christ in God. Our life is as safe in Christ as Christ is safe in God.

"Safe in Christ the *weakest child*
Stands in all God's favour."

"Abide thou with me," said David, "fear not: he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in *safeguard*."

You say, I am so afraid I shall let go the Good Shepherd.

Has the Good Shepherd found you? "Yes."

Has He laid you on His shoulder? "Yes."

Then will He not keep you safely? Who ever heard of a sheep with hands?

Who has the hands, then, if the sheep has not? *The Shepherd.* It is for the shepherd to carry the sheep, not for the sheep to hold on to the shepherd.

Trust the Good Shepherd to carry you, the silly sheep, right across this desert to the bright home above. "Unto Him that is able," &c. (Jude 24, 25.)

He has found me, laid me on His shoulder, and keeps me close to His heart of undying love, and will never let me fall.

"Abide with me: he that seeketh my life

seeketh thy life." He puts his own life first. It is the same thought as that contained in those words to Saul—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *Me?*" Not *them*, but *Me.* He puts Himself between Saul and them. Saul was astonished, and asked, "Who art Thou, Lord?" drawing forth that magnificent answer, the secret of the believer's everlasting safety, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." The believer is nearer to God in oneness with Christ than the archangel. Could we be more safe? We could not be more perfectly safe than we are. The safety is as perfect as the salvation.

The third point is separation. (*v.* 1.) David, God's anointed king, was rejected, and Saul was a usurper. I am in a world that has rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not think that we are sufficiently impressed by the fact that the Saviour is not in this world. My Saviour is rejected here. Have you and I got hold of the fact that we are in a world where Christ is rejected? In the days of David's rejection some saw him as accepted by God, and separated themselves to him rather than seek promotion in Saul's army. They must be for David and against Saul, or for Saul and against David. There was no middle position. So now we are either for Christ or against Christ, either helping to fill heaven, or helping to fill hell. No man can live for himself alone, but each is exerting an influence for eternal good or eternal evil. "Who is on the Lord's side?" was asked in a day that is past (Exod. xxxii.), and the question is the same to-day.

David's brethren gathered to him and all his father's house. We are the brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ who believe on Him; for His message

to Mary was, "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father; and to My God and your God." He is not ashamed to call us brethren. We belong to His Father's house; we are strangers here, and belong to that house over which Christ is head. Let us separate to Him. That does not mean going into a monastery or a nunnery. You can be as worldly in such places as in a palace. That is isolation, not separation. Now is our opportunity of being separated to Christ in the place where He was rejected.

See what the future of the cave of Adullam shall be! "The glory of Israel." (Micah i. 15.) It was the disgrace of Israel in the days of Saul; it will be the glory of Israel in millennial days. God will never forget the place where the king who was a type of His Son, was rejected. For 1800 years the world has rejected Christ, and heaven has with glad acclaim welcomed Him. God will never forget those who have made room for Him in their hearts in the days of His rejection. Where, you ask, are we enjoined to separate to Christ? Look at 2 Cor. vi.—"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters." See also Hebrew xiii. 13. May you know what it is to be

SAVED by Christ,
SAFE in Christ,
SATISFIED with Christ,
SEPARATED to Christ,
SEATED in Christ, delighted to
SERVE Him, and longing to
SEE Him.

H. M. H.

"SUCH A PLACE AS HELL."

"I WILL give £10,000 to any one who can prove to me that there is no such place as hell," said a dying officer to those who stood around his bed.

By the word "hell" he meant the place of eternal punishment.

But the offer was useless. None could disprove the existence of hell. They might have attempted to explain it away; but a mere process of reasoning as to the improbability of such a doom could never suffice, could never satisfy. Facts were necessary, and facts could not be produced. Circumstantial evidence, too, was all the other way. It is notorious that sin is punished. Death, for instance. What is death? Is it not the direct and world-wide effect of sin? An effect which all can see, and see daily. There is not a sin that does not bring its sorrow, nor bear its bitter fruit. All this points to the fact that, even in time, God testifies His hatred of sin. Hell is the witness of His eternal hatred of it.

But "revelation" makes all plain, and places beyond doubt this solemn fact. God has spoken; spoken faithfully, so that all are forewarned. He has not only said that "the wages of sin is death," but He has in mercy lifted the veil that separates us from the eternal future, and shown us the "lake of fire—the second death." Not only has He told us that "nought that defileth" can enter the holy, heavenly city, but He has declared that "the fearful, and unbelieving, the abominable, murderers, sorcerers, whoremongers, idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth

with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

He has placed on record the death of a certain rich man, his burial, and his future. Appalling picture. Torment! tongue never cooled! grief fixed! hopeless despair!

How can these revelations be disproved? They may be despised, derided, ignored; but man cannot make them void, nor ease the guilty conscience of its heavy load. But what money cannot do, blood can. The precious blood of Christ can cleanse the soul from all sin, from all its certain effects too.

Ah! that blood—infinitely precious!

> "The dying thief rejoiced to see
> That Fountain in His day."

And he, too, was a dying man before whose fast-closing eyes loomed a dread and lost eternity. Thousands of pounds were not his to give, no, nor even pennies, in order to purchase relief. He pleaded "guilty." He cried "Lord, remember me;" and we know the happy result. It was "with Me in Paradise." But for the death of Christ this were impossible. Now that Christ has died it is, thank God, free for all. Therefore, dear reader, *if you come to your dying bed unsaved,* it will not be because you have not been forewarned, nor because you did not know the way of salvation, but because you preferred sin, of some kind, to Christ; and your blood will be upon your own head. These are solemn words, and such they are intended to be.

J. W. S.

THE LINE WAS CUT.

DURING a severe gale a foreign brig was slowly driving towards the land near the harbour of S——. Buffeted by the waves, which ever and anon nearly hid her from the sight of the watchers on shore, she neared the harbour, and it seemed as if she would safely reach the smooth water within the bar. A tremendous sea, however, swept the little craft from stem to stern, apparently carrying away the steering gear, and in a moment she was at the mercy of the wind and waves, drifting down upon the rocks.

In less time than it takes to relate, the rocket apparatus was carried down to the beach; and ere the doomed vessel took the ground, the rocket was speeding on its way, carrying a line over her. The block, with whip-line rove through it, was attached, and all was in readiness to pay out promptly, as soon as the men on the wreck began to haul away. To the surprise of all, though it was seen that they had got hold of the line, no attempt was made to do so. The masts soon went by the board, and as there was every likelihood she would speedily go to pieces, the order was given to haul in the rocket-line, and prepare to fire again. This was done, and the line was found to be cut. Three more rockets were fired, each carrying a line over the vessel, but with the same result in each case; the line was cut.

The shades of evening came on apace, the tide rose rapidly, and with heavy hearts the little company on shore were driven back to such a position that they were powerless to do more. Darkness drew a veil upon the scene, and when the morning

dawned no trace was visible of the ill-fated vessel other than the wreckage which strewed the beach. Securely fastened to some fragments of the wreck by the very rocket-lines intended for their deliverance, the bodies of the drowned seamen were washed ashore.

I think I hear my reader say, "They were either mad or ignorant of the use of the apparatus."

True; but what of yourself? If still unsaved, you are drifting helplessly on the waves of time, and nearing the rocks of death and judgment. God in His grace has done all that love could do to meet your desperate need. Is it not madness on your part to neglect His great salvation, the Christ of God?

There are, in this so-called Christian country, thousands of Bible-possessing, church-going professors, who pity the poor heathen, and yet in spite of all their privileges are still unsaved themselves. Such are really using the Scriptures, which have been written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, we might have life through His name (John xx. 31), to ensure their certain damnation. "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John xii. 48.) T. S.

LOOK THE RIGHT WAY.—While I am looking at the sun I cannot see my own shadow, but the moment I turn my back on the sun I see my shadow.

A FAMINE AND A FEAST.

"BEHOLD, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." (Amos viii.)

Thus said the Lord God, the Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, whose word cannot fail. Reader, this was spoken over 2500 years ago, and it has not come to pass yet. God, in His great love and mercy, still waits "to be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." But will this go on for ever? No; God Himself has said that He *has appointed* a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He *hath ordained*.

Thus we see that God's day of grace will run its course, and then, oh, unsaved reader, pause, consider, before it be too late, that One who was from all eternity, who suffered on Calvary's tree at the hands of men like ourselves, will execute judgment "on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Turn to 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, and you will see that this same Jesus will come in the clouds, and take His blood-bought people to Himself, unseen by the world, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; and if you read still further, in 2 Thess. ii. 11, you will see that "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they

all might be damned who *believed not* the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

This we believe is the time of the famine referred to at the head of this paper.

A famine of water or bread is bad indeed, as those well know who have passed through it; but what will it be to run to and fro, and not find the word of God? Men will be in earnest then; they will seek then as they never sought before, but they "shall not find it," saith the Lord.

Oh, imagine if you can the despair that will seize men's hearts then, seeking for God when He is not to be found! To have no hope before them—nothing, nothing but "blackness of darkness for ever," and eternity to be spent with the one who deceived them so, who will no longer soothe the troubled conscience, but who will mock at the anguish of those whom he has induced to believe his lie, rather than the word of the living God.

But thanks be to God, He has provided a feast, a season of plenty, before the famine comes.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. lv. 1.)

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near." (Isa. lv. 6.)

Notice the time, "*Now.*" Not to-morrow, not a year hence; yea, not a moment hence. Many and many a strong person has been cut down without a moment's warning. Resolutions for to-morrow are of no use.

And mark, when God does execute judgment, His sentence will be just. No mercy, no grace then, to temper or ward off the stroke. Absolute, inflexible justice will be meted out then.

Why delay, friend? "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." To-morrow, yea, before you have finished reading this paper, the famine may set in.

Then take salvation now on the freest of terms —"Without money and without price."

> "Without money, without price;
> Believing, just believing, doth suffice."

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x. 9, R.V.)

For how long? A month, a year, and then be lost? Listen to the divine answer, "I give unto My sheep ETERNAL LIFE, and they shall NEVER PERISH."

And do not forget that so sure as salvation is eternal, so sure is the punishment of the unbeliever eternal also. For the same God who said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," says also in His unalterable Word that those of Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth as an *example*, suffering the vengeance of *eternal* fire.

Which will you have, the pleasures of sin for a season, and then an eternity where mercy cannot come? or a little while of suffering for Jesus' sake, a few jeers from the world, and then the Father's smile and Jesus' "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"? Decide, we earnestly entreat you, before it be too late.

"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. . . . And WHOSOEVER will, let him take the water of life freely."

G. W. W.

"I AM EIGHTY YEARS OLD."

IT is surprising how many things people will seek to gain or merit salvation by, rather than simply rest in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "It is finished;" and surely this is sufficient to meet the sinner's need, since it has satisfied the claims of a holy God.

A short time ago, whilst waiting at a railway station, a poor old woman on crutches seated herself beside me, and pointing to the Bible in my hand, she inquiringly said:

"Been to church, my dear?"

"No," I replied. "I have been reading the word of God to some dear old Christians who love to hear it, but cannot read it for themselves because they are blind."

Here she interrupted me, exclaiming, "What would you think of a clergyman, if you had sent to him three or four times over, and he refused to come to you? Ah! I've been shamefully treated!"

"Did you particularly want to see the clergyman?" I inquired, wondering whether her needs were temporal or spiritual.

"Yes, I did," she replied; and began pouring into my ears a list of complaints.

I listened for a few moments; then, knowing that our time together was short, and anxious to ascertain whether she knew anything at all of God's way of salvation, I put the question to her, "Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour?"

Almost angrily she spoke. "What a *foolish* question to ask any one of my age! Do you know how old I am?"

"Age has nothing whatever to do with it," I

replied. "There are many people as old as, and older than, you are, who do not know the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. It is one thing to say He is *the* Saviour, but quite another thing to be able to say, He is *my* Saviour.

"Don't say *another* word, or you will drive me mad. I know all about these things a great deal better than you do. I knew them before you were born. *I am eighty years old;*" and, as if this were a sufficient guarantee for perfect safety, she sank back into the corner of the seat. Her face was so wretched, she looked so utterly miserable, that a feeling of pity for her induced me to venture a few words more.

"If you *really* know the truths of God's word, surely they must comfort you," I began; but evidently she had made up her mind to hear no more, for she stopped me by saying, "I don't want to hear another word, so please say no more."

At this moment my train arrived. Putting my hand in hers, I said, "Now I must say good-bye. You do not want to hear any more of my words, but I want to leave you one little word from this blessed Book to think about. The Lord Jesus says, 'Come unto *Me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you *rest*.' Do come to Him, and you will find rest." I could not wait to hear her reply, but she murmured some words in a softened tone as I left her.

Dear reader, it is a solemn thing to trust to anything of your own for salvation. Works, position, wealth, influence, age, whatever it be, everything apart from Christ and His finished work is a false foundation. "He died, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God;" and there is no other way.

E. C. T.